

Is Harvard or Yale Worse for America?

KAUFFMANN ON CARUSO • POLITICAL PERVERSITY IN CHICAGO • FAIRLIE ON G. B. SHAW

THE USUAL
SUSPECTS
FROM
ATLANTA

THE NEW REPUBLIC

CONSERVATIVES &

*For many on the right, the epidemic
was too good to be true. How
they tried to exploit a tragedy,
and exposed themselves instead.*

by Michael J. Fumento

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FROM WASHINGTON

LAST TESTAMENT

While my fellow journalists have been cavorting in Atlanta, I've been curled up with the 814-page independent counsel's report on Edwin Meese, along with the 104-page (plus ten appendices) reply by Meese's lawyers. This is an activity more in keeping, it seems to me, with the spirit of the coming Age of Dukakis, when reading thick documents will be the pastime of choice in Washington. I'm ready.

Independent Counsel James McKay decided not to indict the attorney general on any of the charges against him, but determined that he did break the law on two small matters and questioned his propriety and "sensitivity" on a variety of others. Meese invokes what has become the standard Catch-22 in such situations: first, any ethical criticisms are illegitimate because McKay was only supposed to decide whether to bring criminal charges; second, the fact that he brought no such charges establishes that Meese is totally blameless.

McKay's report adds little to what was already known about the various misadventures under review. But Meese's deeply disingenuous reply—think of it as the Last Testament of a Conservative Law Man—reconfirms that this is a man who either doesn't know right from wrong or doesn't care.

For example, McKay establishes beyond doubt that in October 1986 Meese knowingly filed a tax return that omitted the capital gain on some stock. He decided not to indict Meese for this on the grounds that Meese's taxes were generally honest, and that Meese pretty clearly intended to amend the return when he got some missing information. Fair enough. But "entirely aboveboard and proper"? It is not proper to file a false return just because you lack the correct information, especially when you've already had a six-month extension to get your affairs in order. Meese's reply characterizes his offense as having "procrastinated in gathering tax records." In fact, he procrastinated

15 months before filing an amended return in February 1988, with the prosecutor nipping at his heels, and even then he paid \$2,400 instead of the \$3,400 that he owed, due to an "accounting error."

Meese also emphasizes that he relied on "his accountant—a respected California C.P.A." in thinking it was OK to lie, temporarily, to the IRS. This "respected accountant" is none other than John R. McKean, the same man who arranged two interest-free loans for Meese back in 1981 and got appointed to the Postal Service board of governors. That was one of the subjects of Meese's previous independent counsel investigation in 1984, after which Meese promised "a much higher level of sensitivity" in the future.

Another small but revealing matter is the job a Washington real estate developer arranged for Meese's wife at a time the developer was having problems renewing a Justice Department lease on one of his buildings. McKay concludes there's no evidence Meese knew anything about the lease matter. Fair enough. But Meese charges McKay with having "intruded upon Mrs. Meese's personal . . . life" by publicizing "her entirely proper and legitimate employment with a respected charitable organization, the Multiple Sclerosis Society."

The developer arranged to pay Mrs. Meese's salary at the MS Society. He clearly did it to help the Meeses, not to help the MS Society, since he'd previously offered her a job at a radio station he owned. Did the Meeses not wonder why this fellow—introduced to them by the ubiquitous E. Bob Wallach—was so eager to help them out financially? Did it not occur to them that, specific quid pro quos aside, it might have something to do with the fact that he was attorney general? Is it "entirely proper and legitimate" to accept a favor of this size (\$40,000 a year) from someone whose obvious motive is sucking up to the attorney general?

Now, the notorious Iraqi pipeline project. Meese calls McKay's inquiry into it "the most poorly conceived, ill-founded, and wasteful . . . in the history of American law enforcement." Wallach, hired by the pipeline's promoters, sent Meese a memo outlining a plan to dissuade the Israelis from blowing it up, including "funds" that "will go directly to Labor," meaning the Israeli Labor Party, although such payments "will be denied everywhere." McKay concluded that this one reference in one of Wallach's many lengthy memos was too sketchy to indict Meese for participating in or fail-

ing to report an attempted illegal foreign bribe. Once again, fair enough.

But Meese endorses Wallach's ludicrous insistence that his memo "was not intended to indicate any payoff, bribe, or quid pro quo of any sort," but merely "reflected his understanding" that funds paid legally to the Israeli government would benefit the Labor Party, since the Israeli government funds its political parties. Why this mundane reality needed to be noted, or would "be denied everywhere," neither Wallach nor Meese troubles to explain.

What's more, Meese did arrange a meeting with the national security adviser and take other steps to advance Wallach's project. McKay dryly calls this "unusual." In hysterically denying that mild charge, Meese's reply tries to have it both ways. On the one hand, the involvement of the attorney general in a matter way outside his bailiwick was "a proper and appropriate effort to assist the search for peaceful economic cooperation among adversaries in the Middle East." On the other hand, Meese merely made some introductions; he "did not advocate or support the project," nor was he "seeking to further it." In short: (a) he did it to bring peace to the Middle East; and (b) he didn't do it.

Meese's many valuable favors to clients of his friend Wallach are unindictable, McKay concludes, because there's no solid evidence of any quid pro quo. Fair enough. But Meese denies having done valuable favors. For Wedtech, trying to get an Army engine contract over the Army's objections, he played a "minor role," merely assuring that the company was "treated fairly." Every struggling small company should enjoy such compassion: Meese arranged a White House meeting and, as a direct result, Wedtech got the contract. As with all such favors, the betrayal of the public interest is exactly the same whether or not there is an illegal payoff.

Meese "never knew Mr. Wallach may have used his name to obtain funds from Wedtech," and apparently never wondered why his friend the West Coast tort lawyer was suddenly importuning him on behalf of a Bronx manufacturer. To this day he does "not know whether there is any truth to the assertion that Mr. Wallach was 'exploiting' access" to him.

The essence of Meese's brief is that by his own standards he has not merely done nothing illegal—he has done nothing wrong. Now that we know his standards, we can judge him by our own. □

A municipal financing story a five-year-old could understand.

Or a two-year-old. Or a child of any age. As long as they don't have to stop running and climbing and scraping their knees in their parks and playgrounds. Because of something as incomprehensible to a child as liability insurance. For a variety of reasons, among them an increase in lawsuits, municipal liability insurance has become a serious problem in California. Some cities face increases of up to 9000%. Others can't buy the insurance at any price.

Up until a year ago, it looked very much as if the playgrounds in a number of California communities would be a casualty of this insurance crisis. The problem was so serious, they were threatened to be closed.



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CORRESPONDENCE

MANAGEMENT PROBLEMS

To the editors:

Jeffrey L. Pasley's cover story "The School for Scandal" (July 4) raises important issues concerning the future of political democracy. Regrettably, his treatment of those issues amounts to little more than a few strident and naive observations on the venality of professional behavior. Pasley's main criticism of the Graduate School of Political Management—a professional school chartered by the New York State Board of Regents to teach the skills and technology of modern politics—is that it seeks to "professionalize" politics and that "politics is too important to be left in the hands of professionals." Whether he approves of this direction in American politics—and his article suggests that he knows very little about it—is of no consequence; the stark fact that emerges from an examination of how democratic politics functions today is that few, if any, candidates or interest groups can participate, much less succeed, in American political life without access to these skills. How then can we preserve a democratic society in the face of increasingly sophisticated political technology? Those who established the GSPM are committed to the idea that the dissemination of these skills beyond the handful of consultants who now have them is the best contribution we can make to restoring balance to our political system.

The school has a second objective: to open the discussion of political ethics in a serious academic environment. Pasley quotes me as having said we have put ethics aside (not true) and that "ethics is one of the things that isn't thought through yet." That quote is accurate and it is true. What I meant and what he failed to understand is that the technology of politics already exists. But the ethical problems of applying these skills in various political settings have not been systematically examined. It will take years of research and public debate to develop the faculty and teaching materials required to address these problems. The school hopes to make a modest contribution to that effort.

Our students have been offered and accepted jobs with major public interest organizations, political consulting firms, the presidential candidacies of both major parties, state government agencies, in political journalism. Some are committed to advancing the interest of underrepre-

sented minorities, and others intend to run for elective office. To dismiss them, their sponsors, and the school itself as a training ground for media manipulators and political hacks is a fatuous criticism and a form of hack journalism that I am unaccustomed to reading in *THE NEW REPUBLIC*. It is consistent, however, with a trend to trash politics and politicians wherever possible, as though there were a more attractive alternative to deciding public issues. There isn't.

NEIL FABRICANT
*President, The Graduate School
of Political Management
New York, New York*

To the editors:

At first I surmised TNR's cover story billing "The School For Sleazeballs," with the subhead "Training America's future influence-peddlers, media manipulators, and political hacks," must be a useful uncovering of some nefarious plot by the underworld or Mafia-types seeking to gain control of American politics. Instead, I discovered that the brash young writer of this piece was simply out to discredit a new Graduate School of Political Management, a school with an outstanding faculty, a school of promise for better things in politics, a school of which I fortunately happen to be a founder and trustee. I was not interviewed, nor were any other trustees or founders, nor any faculty members. Indeed, school officials say the author spent less than one hour in class. He did interview the school's president, who openly discussed the chronic problem of instilling ethics in a graduate curriculum devoted to the art of practical politics. It has never been done before, because nobody in academia has ever considered it vital. Indeed, no school anywhere is doing what the GSPM is attempting to do. And this is what persuaded me and others of a deep need for doing better than what's occurred in the past. We believe there must be some way to teach future political leaders and operatives that the answer lies beyond the present maxim: "Do what you must, but don't get caught."

JERALD F. TERHORST
Washington, D.C.

Jeffrey L. Pasley replies:

The quotations attributed to Mr. Fabricant are correct. I spent a long afternoon and a morning at the school. I talked to a

number of people on the premises and, following the wishes of school officials (who refused to release student phone numbers), repeatedly left my name and number so students and others could speak to me at greater length. Only a few did. As for those connected with the school, like Mr. terHorst, I found that they were often much less involved than Mr. Fabricant led me to believe and depended on the rather incomplete information he relayed to them. In any case, Mr. terHorst does not dispute any of the facts I reported but merely offers a different opinion of the school's mission.

UNAFFIRMATIVE ANSWERS

To the editors:

While I agree with your editorial "Ambush at Amherst" (June 27), the statement that most whites "generally accept affirmative action measures that put them at a disadvantage to blacks" is false. Most whites are opposed to preferential treatment on the basis of race. The 1986 National Election Study conducted by the University of Michigan asked, "Some people say that because of past discrimination it is sometimes necessary for colleges and universities to reserve openings for black students. Others oppose quotas because they say quotas discriminate against whites. What about your opinion—are you for or against quotas to admit black students?" More than 75 percent of white respondents stated that they were opposed. Even when the word "quota" is not used, whites are opposed. In 1988 a Gallup Poll asked, "Because of past discrimination should qualified blacks receive preference over equally qualified whites in such matters as getting into college or getting jobs or not?" In response, 80 percent of whites said "should not."

WILLIAM R. BEER
Brooklyn, New York

GLASNOST REVISITED

To the editors:

Like David Satter ("Why Glasnost Can't Work," June 13), I worked for several years in Moscow and recently returned, in my case after an absence of 18 months, for a brief look. Though we both noted the dramatic impact of *glasnost* and the relative paucity of progress
continued on page 41



THE NEW REPUBLIC

AUGUST 8 & 15, 1988

BAN BOXING

In June a number of well-to-do white men came to Atlantic City, intending to watch at close range as two black men spent the better part of an hour trying to knock each other unconscious. But one of the black men was incapacitated after only 91 seconds, and the spectacle ended abruptly. There sat Jack Nicholson, Sean Penn, George Steinbrenner, and Donald Trump—all dressed up and no blood to flow.

Someday, if all goes well, anthropologists will look back at our society and marvel at the persistent popularity of boxing at this late date in human evolution. The uniqueness of the sport's barbarism lies not in the fact that fighters sometimes die on the job. That's true of football, after all. But boxing is the only modern sport in which *the object of the game* is to move the opponent closer to death. On this point, Mike Tyson, the man left standing in Atlantic City, is much more incisive than Joyce Carol Oates. He notes: "This is a hurt business. When you see guys like Trump, Kennedy, and Rockefeller—bluebloods—when they come to a fight, regardless of what they may represent, they come to see someone get hurt, and my objective is to inflict as much punishment as possible."

Tyson, at age 22, is still able to speak in complete sentences, and at a normal velocity. But boxers with more ring time behind them aren't always so sharp. Did you see the pictures of Muhammad Ali at the Tyson fight, sitting at ringside and smiling? Sit and smile is one of the few things he can do well these days. He has Parkinson's Syndrome, brought on by years of pounding. This isn't as bad as the severe mental debilitation of "punch drunkenness," which afflicts some former fighters. But Ali's speech is slow and slurred, and these days it takes him a good while to conceive and spit out a ditty on par with "Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee."

If boxers were boxing's only victims, railing against it wouldn't be worth the trouble. They're big boys, after all. The real tragedy is all the inner-city teenagers who gather to watch the fights on closed-circuit TV. Many of them were born tethered to a values system that bodes ill for

economic success, and their worship of boxers worsens the odds. Much has been said about the unhealthy fact that so few black role models are professors and lawyers, and so many are athletes. Of all professional athletes, none are less worthy of emulation than boxers. Boxers get rich without an education. They achieve status through violence. Their victories involve no teamwork. And they indulge in ritual self-promotion. Even Tyson—fairly mild-mannered, as these guys go—declared himself "the toughest man on the planet." If there's one thing worse for poor kids than wanting to be the toughest man on the planet, it's wanting to boast about it. Violent egomania just isn't a prescription for success in a post-industrial economy. (To say nothing of the more immediate effects of emulation. According to David Phillips, a sociologist at the University of California, homicides increase appreciably after every nationally broadcast heavyweight championship fight.)

There's no denying that boxing has its up side. If the sport didn't exist, a few hardworking millionaires, like Tyson, would be spending their lives washing dishes. On the other hand, thousands of poor kids wouldn't be enticed into dropping out of school to hang around dingy gyms and get pummeled for nickels and dimes. And hundreds of thousands of young, poor blacks and Hispanics would be spared the burden of idols like James ("Bonecrusher") Smith, Hector ("Macho") Camacho, and Adilson ("Ma-guila Gorilla") Rodrigues.

The standard argument against banning boxing is libertarian: people should be allowed to do whatever they want—pay people to punch each other, get paid to get punched, etc. But even in capitalist America there are circumstances under which commerce can rightly be restrained. Boxing's apologists sound quite principled when they defend Muhammad Ali's right to get his brains scrambled, but few of them would defend a drug addict's right to do the same. The question is whether boxing is pernicious enough to join drug use, prostitution, and sev-

eral other "victimless" pastimes deemed illegal. It's a tough call, but we vote yes.

Enlightened people may disagree. But if they're really enlightened, they'll acknowledge that boxing isn't a good thing. And they should therefore be willing to help mobilize anti-boxing opinion (which is a prerequisite for banning the sport anyway). The first step is a concerted effort by society's upper crust to quit reveling in the blood of the disadvantaged. Editors at *Time*, *People*, *Life*, and *Sports Illustrated* (that's about half of Time Inc.) should start feeling guilty about putting Mike Tyson on the cover. New York socialites should start raising eyebrows when Donald Trump (who sponsored the Tyson fight) uses boxers as social steppingstones. Pepsi-Cola should ponder the value of associating itself so intimately with such a destructive sport. And political leaders who talk about the need for white-collar black role models should put their money where their mouths are. Maybe Jesse Jackson, veteran boycotter, would like to lead a black boycott of Time Inc., Pepsi, and Trump Casino, all of which have done their share this summer to impede the progress of poor blacks. But it's hard to boycott Trump Casino when you're in Atlantic City rubbing elbows with Trump, as Jackson was in June.

NOTEBOOK

□ THE ART OF VIVID SPORTSWRITING:

"In the other corner, Michael Spinks was perspiring, the sweat glistening on his face above the white towel inside his white satin robe. Across the ring, Mike Tyson, as usual, was not wearing a robe. But as he prowled back and forth waiting for the introductions to end, his face was dry. So were his hunched shoulders and his torso..." —Dave Anderson in the *New York Times*, June 29

"When [Spinks] removed his robe, his 6' 2½" body looked trim... but it was dry. Spinks is a notoriously slow starter; it did not bode well that he hadn't warmed up properly. By contrast, the 21-year-old Tyson was glistening as he prowled the ring during the introductions..." —*Sports Illustrated*, July 4

(thanks to Carl and Carol Flanders, Montclair, New Jersey)

□ WELL, IF IT'S NOT ONE THING, IT'S ANOTHER:

"If the warming continues at its present rate, mankind will find itself living on a hothouse of a planet, not blooming

THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

This Week	Last Week	Weeks on Chart
1. HOT ENOUGH FOR YOU? ✓	*	3
<i>Greenhouse.</i> How hot is it? So hot that the homeless became a summer story. So hot that nuclear power is emerging as an environmental alternative. So hot that the greenhouse effect has popped up in political speechifying, often as simply "the greenhouse."		
2. THE GETTING WAS GOOD ✓	*	4
<i>Jackson.</i> So what did Jackson finally get? He got used. The more fits he threw, the juicier a target he became. By treating Jackson dismissively, Dukakis made himself seem muscular. All this is sad, especially sad that it worked so well.		
3. BEAMING & NOTHINGNESS ✓	1	5
<i>The race.</i> Shrinking network coverage and the made-for-TV convention merged this year, and the result was appalling. The convention's only function was hogging the TV limelight, and TV was barely interested.		
4. A PAX ON BOTH HOUSES ✓	2	19
<i>Gulf.</i> Despite the professed surprise about "sanity breaking out" in Iran, the new interest in peace and reasonable global relations is, historically, a structured event. Revolutions, for all their chest-beating, burn themselves out and return, by one or another route, to their political starting points.		
5. THE WRITE-OFF STUFF ✓	*	4
<i>Space.</i> <i>Discovery's</i> ongoing problems make a painful saga of our return to space. But this loss of confidence may be melding with the Gorbo Thaw. It's been years since space was competitive;		

*Item resurfaces in the Zeitgeist after at least one week's absence.

now it is showing signs of becoming cooperative.

6. RETURN TO SPENDER ✓	—	1
<i>Postal Service.</i> The USPS has fallen to fourth among overnight delivery services, and is revamping its advertising. Good luck. The real mail story is the dumping of Ross Perot, who was hired to do a cost analysis, since Perot is perceived as the last competent man in America.		
7. BAD BOYS ✓	—	1
<i>Heroes.</i> The collapse of <i>Rambo III</i> has put the future of the American hero in doubt. The problem: a Villain Crisis. Commies are stale, generic Arabs are out of the question, and you can only get so far with Latinish dope peddlers and terrorists. One possibility: a new Yellow Peril that will grow out of economic rivalry.		
8. THE WESTERN FRONT ✓	—	1
<i>1992.</i> The abolition of Western Europe's trade barriers in 1992 is starting to seep into the U.S. consciousness. While the ad industry is happy, the event is generally playing as a threat. A more robust and confident Europe is not perceived as the answer to U.S. needs.		
9. LATE EXPECTATIONS ✓	—	1
<i>Summer Olympics.</i> It's hard to detect any sense of anticipation associated with the upcoming Seoul games. There's more talk about safety than about competition; the U.S. sports establishment has actually been trying to lower expectations. Quite a contrast.		
10. EAT MEAT AND BE MERRY ✓	*	2
<i>Health backlash.</i> The "Sleeper" Syndrome (additives prevent cancer, etc.) continues. Animal fats contain "stearic acid," which may lower your cholesterol. Dieting may be a terrible mistake; it could ruin your metabolism. Chocolate's not so bad for your teeth, but watch out for... raisins.		

but withering. . . Polar ice caps might also partially melt.”
—*Newsweek* cover story on the greenhouse effect, July 11,
page 19

“Now scientists are awakening to a frightening new possibility. CFCs may also make the pole colder, for ozone absorbs heat. If there is less ozone, Antarctica may become even more frigid.” —sidebar on the ozone layer, same issue, page 22

(thanks to Gene Lyons, Little Rock, Arkansas)

□ PRIVATIZATION:

An increasingly public hunt for a running mate.

—*New York Times*, July 6

Quest for a Running Mate: A Slow and Private Process

—same paper, next day

□ SCRAMBLED:

Eating eggs can be healthy

—*Honolulu Star-Bulletin*, June 15, page E-2

Egg food-poisoning on the rise

—same paper, same day, same page

(thanks to Mark A. Hazlett, Honolulu, Hawaii)

□ CROP REDUCTION: This is a double issue. TNR will not publish next week so that the editors can pray for rain.

CAMPAIGN '88

ENDLESS QUEST

Atlanta

More than a month after the last Democratic primary had left him far behind Michael Dukakis, Jesse Jackson vowed that his campaign would go on, because “the quest for justice and peace is endless”; because “there’s not enough AIDS research . . . there are three to five million homeless people . . . our teachers are not being paid adequately,” and so on—there is war in Central America, war in the Middle East, and apartheid in South Africa.

Jackson aides were serving notice here at the Democratic convention that even if Dukakis is elected president in November, there will be a continuing Jackson campaign to put leftward pressure on the Dukakis administration. On the basis of Jackson’s character and previous performance, it’s reasonable to expect that if (really, when) Dukakis’s performance fails to measure up to the expectations of the “progressive” movement he heads, Jackson will consider challenging him for the 1992 Democratic nomination the way Edward Kennedy challenged Jimmy Carter in 1980. Certainly the threat of a challenge will be a Jackson bargaining lever throughout a Dukakis first term. If Dukakis

should lose to George Bush this year, it’s almost a lead-pipe cinch that Jackson would immediately begin running for president again, and might start out as the front-runner.

Even though Jackson has grown since 1984, his behavior during the endgame of the 1988 Democratic race indicates that he is, as one party activist put it, “insatiable for the limelight” and next to impossible to satisfy. Walter Mondale, who spent hours trying to negotiate a cooperative relationship with Jackson in 1984, told me, “He wants you to keep offering things like in a smorgasbord. He wants to test you and see what the outer limits are.”

As Jackson was dominating pre-convention publicity with his bus caravan from Chicago to Atlanta, his threats to challenge the nomination of Lloyd Bentsen for vice president, and his ambiguous demands to be treated as an equal to Bentsen during the fall campaign and a “partner” with “shared responsibility” in the Dukakis administration, Mondale expressed the worry that Dukakis would lose the chance to establish his presidential stature, “the most vital asset a candidate has.”

Dukakis succeeded in both limiting and satisfying Jackson’s appetite—at least for now. Dukakis apparently ruled out negotiations about Jackson’s influence, if any, in the transition and the presidency, but gave Jackson enough concessions—campaign money, an airplane, jobs for his aides, and seats on the Democratic National Committee—to ensure Jackson’s cooperation during the convention and the campaign. Jackson obviously deserves credit for the agreement too. This year, he seems to have understood when to quit pushing for concessions, perhaps out of an awareness that his demands were beginning to backfire and arouse indignation among delegates.

Jackson spokesman Frank Watkins said that Jackson had to bargain hard because he is an outsider. “He had no senators, governors, or state chairmen with him who could use their power to get what he wanted out of sight, in the backrooms.” Actually, Jackson relied on both backroom bargaining and public pressure to get what he wanted.

The Jackson-Dukakis entente will probably prove temporary. When Jackson and Dukakis announced it on July 18, Jackson’s face was somber, not ecstatic. Dukakis pointedly avoided using Jackson’s word, “partnership.” This—and the defeat or withdrawal of Jackson minority platform planks—certainly helped Dukakis establish a presidential stature.

Jackson’s Tuesday night speech to the convention was almost unalloyedly positive, generous, and inspiring. It also revealed more than ever before the pain left from his childhood—over an illegitimate birth and having white people’s leftovers for Thanksgiving dinners. That had to help even harsh critics of Jackson’s radical policies to understand his identification with the downtrodden. It also helped them understand, perhaps, his constant need to have his personal dignity validated.

While gracious toward Dukakis, the speech did contain one small hint of the differences to come. Jackson’s advance text said that “Governor Dukakis and I share a common

commitment to new priorities . . . to expansion and inclusion . . . to a shared national campaign strategy and involvement at every level." When he read the speech, he left Dukakis out, and the commitment became Jackson's alone.

The speech also contained items on Jackson's agenda that probably will become demands against the next administration, including bailouts for failing farmers, earmarked "set-asides" for poor neighborhoods within various government programs, restoration of 70 percent tax rates for the rich, transfer of money now spent on defending Europe and Japan to social programs, a no-first-use nuclear policy and self-determination for Palestinians.

The chief proponent of Palestinian statehood in Jackson's entourage, James Zogby, said that during a Dukakis administration, the Jackson movement will "push, press, prod, and make life uncomfortable" for Dukakis. Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, who's been cool to Jackson ever since their days together as lieutenants of Martin Luther King, likened Jackson to Henry Wallace, FDR's leftist agriculture secretary and vice president. "Wallace never succeeded in bringing about socialism," he said, "but his influence helped bring about the New Deal."

JACKSON SEEMS TO have ruled out taking any "job, title, or salary" in a Dukakis administration. To do that would be to submit to team discipline with someone else as captain. Jackson shows every sign of planning to reconstitute his National Rainbow Coalition as an independent vehicle for continuing political action. He has established a PAC with a budget targeted at \$2 million, and he plans to put heat on established political leaders in states he carried in the primaries but who did not support his nomination.

As a result of the 1988 campaign, Jackson has greatly increased his power and personal respect. He received seven million votes during the primaries, 30 percent of the total. He received only 13 percent of all white votes, but he campaigned far more extensively among whites than any white candidate did among blacks. He became so identified with hard-pressed farmers, striking workers, AIDS victims, and peace activists that he can lay legitimate claim to a "rainbow" of support behind him.

The movement is sufficiently organized at the grass-roots level that eight Democratic state conventions this year passed resolutions calling for an independent Palestinian state and seven others considered such a resolution. This trend, and the increasing legitimization of the Palestinian cause within the Democratic Party, are worrisome to pro-Israel groups, which plan to devote added resources to grass-roots organizing.

Jackson remains a committed leftist on international issues. He recommends trade sanctions against U.S. allies for alleged "slave labor" practices, but recommends expanded trade with the Soviet Union and the lifting of sanctions against Cuba and Nicaragua. But it has been four years since he made any outrageous public gestures such as hugging Yasir Arafat or praising Fidel Castro. The closest Jackson came this year was to visit a convicted IRA terrorist in prison and to urge his release. Jackson is succeeding in

spreading amnesia about his sympathy for radical liberation movements. This indicates political discipline on his part, if not a moderation of his fundamental views. This year Jackson also adopted the pattern of Martin Luther King, criticizing American failures to live up to its own ideals of equity and democracy rather than (as in 1984) bitterly criticizing the United States itself. It's hard to know whether this is a mere improvement in marketing or an example of true maturing.

Jackson has been keeping more moderate company this year than he did in 1984. He still has far-left activists in his entourage, but he is also collaborating more closely with pragmatic black elected officials and with party moderates such as Ron Brown, his convention political manager. It's just possible, if Dukakis manages his relations with Jackson brilliantly, that Jackson will gradually move away from being a protest movement leader and will become more capable of real-world political leadership.

Right now, though, Jackson is far from that. Four years ago, he had committed such public offenses—such as embracing Louis Farrakhan and calling Jews "Hymies"—that he had to issue a semi-apology at the Democratic convention and assure his audience that "God isn't finished with me yet." This year, he committed none of those offenses and made no apologies. One can only hope that God is still working on him, though.

MORTON M. KONDRACKE

CAMPAIGN '88

TOGETHER AGAIN

Atlanta

Republicans must have been drooling as they watched the Democratic National Convention. It wasn't that Democrats made fools of themselves on national TV again and gave the GOP fresh ammunition to use against Michael Dukakis in the fall. Nope, Republicans had to be envious. Democrats cut out the zaniness, and there wasn't another take-no-prisoners battle for the "soul" of the party. The convention was entirely choreographed and high-tech. Jimmy Carter, among others, was introduced by a video. Nothing dramatic or unpredictable or even very interesting happened. Nothing was supposed to. Not only was dissent stifled, but dissenters were persuaded to endorse positions they've publicly opposed. In other words, it was the kind of convention Republicans love, the kind that prepares a party for victory in November.

Political conventions exist nowadays because the TV networks are willing to cover them. The presidential nominee, after all, is chosen months earlier, and the platform is either dictated by the nominee or worked out in negotiations between the likely nominee and any remaining rivals.

Still, the networks pretend conventions are important and show them in prime time, so parties try to put a nice face on. The key is controlling the story line. Democrats are bad at this. They usually lose control and let the story line become unattractive: disunity in 1968 and 1980, unbridled leftism in 1972, political clumsiness in 1984. In Atlanta they kept control.

THE BIGGEST FEAR among Democrats was that they'd come off on TV as weirdos, doomsayers, or "tax-and-spend" liberals, or as folks so caught up in ideological squabbling that they couldn't be trusted to run the government. Democratic national chairman Paul Kirk and strategists in the Dukakis camp were desperate for the party to appear normal, optimistic, moderate, and united. "Politics is the art of appearance," explained House Majority Leader Thomas Foley. (I'd always heard politics was the art of compromise, or the art of the possible, but never mind.) This time, Democrats were on their best behavior. They were well dressed. They were straight. "I'm part of the Berkeley crowd," a young Dukakis worker from the University of California said. "But I guess I shouldn't say that. This is a moderate campaign."

Democrats cleaned up their language and leached their speeches and platform. The L-word, liberal, was all but banned. Dukakis has long shunned it. Teddy Kennedy didn't use it. Jesse Jackson did, but negatively. In his address—a collection of greatest hits from his stump speeches—he trashed "boundless liberalism." Everyone agreed that the party's liberal wing is no longer. It's now "the progressive wing." And for good reason. The word "liberal" is a killer. Democrats "have finally learned that you can be a liberal, but you can't say you're a liberal," said Dan McClung, a Lloyd Bentsen adviser.

Another word that vanished at the convention was "spending." I didn't hear a single person advocate more domestic spending, though they talked about new programs for health care, child care, education, etc. But these aren't spending programs. They're investments. "It's time to invest in the education and care of our children," said Carter.

The plan for the convention was the same as the plan for Dukakis's campaign: avoid specifics or you'll be vulnerable to Republican attacks. Speaker after speaker followed it. The keynoter, Texas State Treasurer Ann Richards, boldly came out in favor of Social Security, rural electrification, and federal insurance of bank deposits, three programs passed during the New Deal. She shied away from programs proposed in the last 50 years. "One of the saving graces of Democrats is that we are candid," she insisted. "We are straight talking. We tell people what we think." Oh.

The platform was a masterpiece of purposeful fuzziness. Jackson wanted it to be specific and emphatically liberal. Oops, I mean progressive. Poll after poll showed that delegates, even the majority Dukakis contingent, agreed with Jackson on specifics. They want higher taxes for the rich, a declaration of no first use of nukes, a military spending freeze, and Palestinian "self-determination." CNN

found that 84 percent favor higher taxes for the wealthy, 70 percent are for a Palestinian homeland, and 89 percent want to cut Pentagon spending. But they bit the bullet and voted moderate for Mike. Representative Ed Markey of Massachusetts, a fervent advocate of no first use who nevertheless opposed Jackson's plank, said Dukakis's heart was with no first users, but as president he'd need "flexibility." Actually, it's as a candidate that he needs flexibility, to avoid being painted a nuclear disarmar.

Two other Democratic windfalls were the general absence of crazies and the invisibility of special interest groups. Protesters across the street from the convention hall were too few to attract serious attention. LaRouchies set up tables in hopes of trying to get delegates to sign a petition allowing Lyndon LaRouche to be nominated for president along with Dukakis and Jackson. I flirted with the idea of posing as a delegate and signing Robert Strauss's name, but then chickened out. LaRouche wasn't nominated.

Labor delegates didn't broadcast their presence as they did at the 1984 convention in San Francisco. Nor did the homosexuals. If I hadn't seen AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland on an elevator, I wouldn't have known he was in town. He was making no demands or complaints. Lloyd Bentsen as veep? Fine with him. "I'd have swallowed Dracula if it would add two points to the ticket," he said.

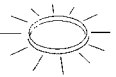
Nearly everyone went to great lengths to sound optimistic, having been told that pessimism drives away voters. My impression is that Democratic activists think the economy is about to collapse, yet they sounded upbeat in public. Dukakis came up with a collection of adjectives that reflect his effort to avoid doomsaying. His administration will provide "strong, new, hopeful, confident, and optimistic leadership," he declared at his joint press conference with Jackson on opening day. At a panel on children and families, Senator Chris Dodd of Connecticut was apologetic about the subject matter. "I want to make it clear right from the start that we don't consider teen pregnancy or high school dropouts or the lack of adequate housing, education, and child care for this nation's children to be undesirable, 'gloom and doom' topics," Dodd said. "They're only undesirable if you lack a solution."

DEMOCRATS have learned a painful lesson. Left to their own devices, they'll lose control of the story line and wind up losing the election. So liberals were willing to masquerade as moderates. That, of course, is what liberals think Dukakis is doing. This is called pragmatism. "Everybody understood the game and played by the rules," said Ray Strother, a media consultant who advises Bentsen. "There wasn't a conspiracy, but everybody understood that you had to tiptoe in the dark."

There wasn't even a remote chance that Jesse Jackson would storm off in a huff. He had everything to lose if he did. If Dukakis wins in November anyway, Jackson will be left with no clout. If Dukakis loses, he'll get some of the blame. Jackson's pre-convention ploy was familiar: a fresh demand that he be made happy about things. He did the same thing in 1984. This time, he extracted a few minor

concessions from Dukakis, most of which he'd have gotten anyway. To get an airplane and travel expenses for the fall, all he had to do was ask. Dukakis would rent him the Concorde if he wanted it, or buy him a B-1. For Dukakis, it was extraordinarily important that Jackson be in line by opening day. The story line he'd planned for the convention was party unity, and that wouldn't fly while Jackson was still beefing. With six hours to spare, Dukakis and Jackson reconciled, and unity became the story. Jackson even made it a central theme in his speech. "The only time we win is when we come together," he said. He's right, and Democrats have.

FRED BARNES

NICE  GUYS

FRIENDLY FOLEY

(It's sometimes said that TNR is too negative. This is the first in an occasional series of articles about people we like.)

Tom Foley is a limousine liberal. Most days, the House majority leader travels in a government-supplied Lincoln Town Car to his office in the capital. In the backseat sits Alice, his 15-year-old Belgian sheepdog. In the front, beside the chauffeur, sits Foley, a hefty, white-haired man wearing a sleepy stare and a baggy Brooks Brothers suit. He's joined at the office by Heather Strachan Foley, his



wife and unpaid administrative assistant, who cruises into work in jeans and sneakers, her graying hair tied in two long braids.

Foley's wife and dog (he has no children) are the most colorful things about him. He likes classical music and electronics, he's an expert on military history

and the rules of Congress, and, having chaired the Agriculture Committee from 1975 through 1981, he may know more about farm issues than most members of the House would ever want to. He doesn't go in for backroom skulduggery, like Lyndon Johnson. He's no wheeler-dealer, like Tip O'Neill, and he doesn't carry the aroma of snake oil, like his leadership chums Speaker Jim Wright and Majority Whip Tony Coelho. He signs his name to few bills and has all the passion of a social studies teacher. Even his best friends don't think of him as an orator. So how come he's made it to the top?

Believe it or not, Foley, 58, may be the Democrat of the future. Beneath the somewhat drab exterior, the 12-term incumbent from Washington state embodies a new Demo-

cratic image: competent, cool, trustworthy, with no rough edges. He's an authoritative presence, hammering out the details of a pressing bill—the 1985 Gramm-Rudman-Hollings package, for instance—with Democrats of all political stripes seated around him in his office. He's a calming presence. On the 1987 Continuing Resolution, he appeased Midwestern worries about funds for rural electric cooperatives by using an arcane parliamentary tactic—an "amendment to an amendment in disagreement"—to smooth the bill's passage. It's this resourcefulness that has gotten Foley talked about as a replacement for the embattled Speaker Wright.

Watch Foley at the Democratic convention, where he's slated to be parliamentarian. Even though he won't be on the ticket (he long ago withdrew from consideration for the second spot), his commanding personality will be quietly felt—in his meetings with the press, in the way he calls his party to order, and in his aura of friendly, credible intelligence. He's Walter Cronkite come to Washington.

IN 1982, when Foley had been representing the eastern region of Washington, around Spokane, for 18 years and was in his second year as majority whip, he had his first moment of public glory. It came when Tip O'Neill chose him to sell the three-year, \$98 billion package of tax increases that had been endorsed by President Reagan. Many Democrats were balking at the measure, unwilling to go along with a president who had labeled them the tax-and-spend party. Yet they were eager to counter the tax cut of the previous year and to protect programs scheduled for cuts. Foley went on television to deliver the Democratic response to the president's special address about the compromise. His calm, non-partisan pitch for members to vote for "economic reality" and muster the "political courage" to face ballooning deficits was so effective that he is credited with coaxing about 50 votes back into the yea column overnight. At the next meeting of the leadership, O'Neill declared, "A star is born."

TV has been good to Foley. Since ascending to the No. 2 slot in the House in 1987, he has become a spokesman for his colleagues, appearing regularly on the major shows. Consultants might not consider him a natural for the medium (he's hardly Kennedyesque). But when he's on CNN or the Brinkley show, making the case against aiding the *contras* or talking about belt-tightening to lower the deficit, he recalls the calm impartiality of Cronkite, whom he resembles a little. He's proof that the Democrats have grown up. They've outlived their label as the party of special interests.

In person, Foley's circumspection can be less transporting. When I asked him to explain his success, he hemmed and hawed and shifted in his seat. Not wanting to sound self-aggrandizing, he talked about "luck, hard work. . . . I don't want to sound sort of homiletic, but . . ."

But he sounds homiletic. Foley inherited the dutiful, upright bearing of his father, a Superior Court judge of whom it was said—according to Heather Foley—"Judge

Foley can sentence you to death and you'd thank him for a fair trial." There's something of the earnest Rotarian about him, something reminiscent of civics books and pledges of allegiance. Foley repeats a joke three times in one day of endless speeches: "There are two great sins in politics. Number one, candidates who don't keep their campaign promises; and number two, candidates who *do* keep their campaign promises." Not funny, but the folksy delivery warms the crowd to laughter anyway. Foley doesn't use humor the way President Reagan does—to explain his views. His punch lines are there to relax people.

Although Foley was a long-time friend and confidant of Henry Jackson, a fellow senator from Washington state, he has never conveyed Jackson's emotion. He's always well informed, but he keeps his cards close to his vest. "I don't go in for that old-fashioned party-bashing," he says. Thus he has backed farm price supports, but has studiously avoided Gephardt-style rhetoric. It's all part of being a party leader. "Once in a while I've thought, gosh, it'd sort of be fun to go back to being a regular member of a committee and raise hell about something. But there are the responsibilities of trying to bring together opinion and get a result." O'Neill used to chide Foley for seeing "three sides to every issue."

IN 1974 Foley was a midlevel member of the Agriculture Committee with a reputation for extensive knowledge of farm issues (some of the country's densest wheat-growing areas are in his district). Yet he had forged ties to the reform wing of the party, having gotten elected in 1972 as chairman of the House's Democratic Study Group, the liberal policy and strategy arm then dominated by Phillip Burton. So even as he bolstered his reputation among older party members with responsible conduct in committee, he was earning his reform credentials. He led the DSG's successful drive to weaken the seniority system and open up committee proceedings.

Foley has managed to gain power without appearing to covet it. In 1974 the defeat of several members and the resignation of others gave him the second spot on the Ag Committee, behind Chairman W.R. Poage, a sickly 66-year-old. In 1975, as the committee slots were being divided, the House voted to oust Poage as a direct result of the DSG reforms led by Foley. Though he stood to become chairman, and thus a House insider, Foley spoke out in support of Poage. Poage still lost. Foley kept Poage's staff and nurtured a strong relationship with the former chairman, who still sat on the committee.

Critics of Foley see an opportunistic politician who's learned how to get ahead at the expense of strong convictions or ideals. There is a measure of truth to this. As he's gained influence, he's taken on more of the shadings of the national party. His ADA (Americans for Democratic Action) rating jumped from 55 in 1981, when he was appointed majority whip, to 75 last year. And there have been instances when Foley has fallen in line behind legislation he admittedly didn't much like. He and Wright first came out in favor of the MX in 1983, then stepped back when

House liberals became enraged. (Foley and Wright said their minds had been changed by new details about the weapon.) And when he walks out of step with the party, he tends to follow the mandate of his home state, not his conscience. He's a longtime opponent of gun-control bills, which are unpopular in Washington state, though he doesn't buy the "right-to-bear-arms" philosophy.

In past years the road to the majority leader post has been a tough one. Wright slugged it out with two opponents in 1976. But when Foley finished his time as majority whip, nobody stepped forward to take him on. In part this was in deference to the job he had done as whip, drawing members into the leadership from all sides of the party by assigning them task forces to administer. Foley innovatively expanded the deputy whip organization—upping the number of deputies from 36 to 83. Another reason Foley heads off challenges is that he may just be the most liked member of the House among his colleagues. (At least, he keeps topping the informal polls.)

Foley has paid a price for becoming a national Democrat. In 1980, after somewhat neglecting his conservative district, he almost fell victim to the Reagan revolution. To retain his seat, he had to run a tough campaign against a wealthy Reaganite surgeon who was ahead in the polls until the last week, when a series of radio spots linking Foley to fetal experimentation backfired. Now Foley takes the trouble to visit his district every two weeks, and he can keep his seat for just about as long as he wants. That means he'll probably be Speaker when Jim Wright steps down—which some House Democrats hope will be sooner than originally forecast.

Before Lloyd Bentsen was chosen for the 1988 presidential ticket, Foley was asked what he thought of the idea of being vice president. He gave the predictably cautious reply. "It's presumptuous to talk about an offer that hasn't been made, but I'm happy in the House." Heather Foley's reply was: "No way. Not a chance. We wouldn't want to live in a fishbowl. Would you want *your* character analyzed by *Vanity Fair*?"

Then again, *Vanity Fair* probably wouldn't want to analyze Tom Foley's character anyway.

ARI POSNER

CAMPAIGN '88

IVY SCOREBOARD

SCHMOOZING WITH reporters not long ago, Senator Al Gore remarked solemnly that he was pleased that the overarching issue of the 1988 presidential campaign had at last been joined. "All right, senator," said one of the reporters, "Which do *you* think is more elitist, Harvard or Yale?"

"Isn't it obvious?" replied Gore (Harvard '69). "One of them is the exclusive preserve of the rich and privileged. While the other"—and here he gnarled his hands into fists and deepened his voice to a guttural peasant growl—"is of the soil."

BUT WHICH is which? It was George Bush (Yale '48) who put the issue on the nation's agenda, by assailing Michael Dukakis for "making some sort of macho statement out of Harvard." He followed up on this seemingly oxymoronic attack by accusing Dukakis of having "foreign policy views born in Harvard Yard's boutique." Thus did the bulldog go bow wow wow.

The Duke didn't bark back, contenting himself with the observation that, strictly speaking, he isn't a Harvard guy at all. "I'm a Swarthmore guy," he says.

"How come?" I asked him. "Doesn't the top student at Brookline High School always go to Harvard?"

"Not always, no," Dukakis said. "I wanted, first, to go to a coed school, and, second, to stay active athletically, [so] for me the Ivies just weren't a factor. . . . My brother . . . was the one who got me interested in Swarthmore. He said, 'You like cities, and there's a school that's supposed to be very good outside Philadelphia.' I'd never heard of it. I'm not sure I knew what a Quaker was, to tell you the truth. But it was a great experience."

To a truly effete Harvard snob, the fact that Dukakis went to Harvard Law School and later taught at the John F. Kennedy School of Government no more makes him a Harvard man than the fact that he might secure his bicycle with a Yale lock would make him a Yale man. Referring to these places as "the Ivies" is a dead giveaway that he is a product of none of them.

On the other hand, no Yale snob, however effete, could possibly see George Bush as being any color but the deepest blue. He went to Yale. His father, Senator Prescott Bush of Connecticut, went to Yale, took a graduate degree at Yale, got an honorary doctorate from Yale, and served as a fellow of the Yale Corporation. His brothers went to Yale. His uncles went to Yale. His sons went to Yale. His brothers' and sister's sons went to Yale. Moreover, George Bush had the kind of Yale panache that might have turned the head of Daisy Buchanan. He wore the sacred Y as captain of the varsity baseball team. And he was "tapped" for membership in Skull and Bones, the most prestigious of Yale's secret societies. This is probably the most elite experience that an American college student can have.

But this does not resolve the question of the relative elitism of the two institutions themselves. Let us consider it from a variety of perspectives:

Longevity. Harvard was founded in 1636. Yale was founded in 1701, both in imitation of and in opposition to Harvard, which was seen as having grown theologically lax. Yale's anxiety about its status as against Harvard dates from Year One. "[A]ll persons admitted to any Degrees," wrote Samuel Sewall in a letter to Yale's founders, "shall have the same Honor & Respect shown them that

Students have or ought to have had who recd. Degrees at Harvard College at Cambridge." From Sewall to Bush, the eyes of Yale have been on Harvard rather more than the reverse. In this category, Harvard must be judged more elitist.

Class. Neither university is noticeably proletarian. Only 6.7 percent of the fathers of the Harvard class of 1982 worked in blue-collar occupations, compared with 47 percent of the country's total male work force. Four-fifths of the Harvard dads were managers or professionals. I couldn't lay my hands on the figures for Yale, but I did find some comparative statistics on students admitted from private schools, a good indicator of elitist tendencies. Between the world wars around 75 percent of Yalies had "prepped," as against roughly 55 percent of Harvardians. During the 1940s, Bush's era, Yale was 65.8 percent prepster, Harvard 50.4. By the 1950s both schools were admitting mostly public school boys, but to this day Yale's ambience remains preppier than Harvard's. Award this category to Yale.

Snobbery. Harvard's tends to be coy—"I go to school in Boston." Yale's is more robust—"Boola boola!" Within the two institutions, the principal snobbery involves social clubs. (Fraternities to you.) Yale's are called "secret societies," with names like Skull and Bones, Scroll and Key, Wolf's Head, etc. Harvard's are called "final clubs"—the Porcellian being the most prestigious. Both clubs and societies have elaborate physical plants and large alumni endowments. Blacks and Jews are no longer excluded from any of these organizations; all but two of the secret societies, but none of the final clubs, admit women.

In the final clubs, activities include drinking, wearing tuxedos, and loafing. In the secret societies, the principal activity is a twice-weekly mandatory dinner. What goes on at these dinners is supposed to be secret, but it is universally believed by non-members at Yale that the rituals of Skull and Bones include nude mud wrestling, masturbating into a coffin, and detailed recountings of personal sexual histories. (As Bush was already married when he was tapped, he was presumably able to enlighten his fellow Bonesmen on what it was like to "go all the way.")

Membership in the secret societies is said to be marginally more meritocratic and less dependent upon family connections than membership in the final clubs. On the other hand, these institutions matter much more at Yale, and yet are smaller. Therefore more people's feelings get hurt by being excluded at Yale—an important plus, elitism-wise. This category must be counted a draw.

SO WE HAVE a tie. But Bush's literal point wasn't that Harvard is elitist. It was that Harvard is the center of, as he put it, "a philosophical cult normally identified with extremely liberal causes." In this he may be on slightly firmer ground. In the 1948 *Harvard Crimson* student poll, Thomas E. Dewey ran behind President Truman, Henry A. Wallace, and Norman Thomas. In the *Yale Daily News* poll, Dewey got 88 percent. Even today, Republicans are fairly common at Yale. Harvard gave us John Reed and W. E. B.

du Bois. Yale gave us William F. Buckley Jr., even though Buckley made his reputation denouncing the atheism and collectivism of the Yale faculty. The Kennedy School, presumably the boutique to which Bush had reference, does indeed count a couple of Dukakis foreign policy advisers on its faculty. But they are cautious centrists, not "extremely liberal" philosophical cultists. And the K-School faculty also includes many Republicans, including Richard Thornburgh, Reagan's new attorney general-designate, whom Bush has promised to retain.

As for the non-Ivy League Middle American voters to whose presumed prejudices Bush was trying to appeal, they are likely to regard the controversy, if they regard it at all, in the same light as George Bernard Shaw. Offered an honorary degree as an inducement to participate in Harvard's tricentenary celebration in 1936, Shaw replied, "If Harvard would celebrate its 300th anniversary by burning itself to the ground and sowing its site with salt, the ceremony would give me the liveliest satisfaction as an example to all the other famous old corrupters of youth"—sound good, Mr. Vice President? hang on—"including Yale, Oxford, Cambridge, the Sorbonne etc. etc. etc." Shaw didn't mention Swarthmore, possibly because, like Dukakis before his brother clued him in, he had never heard of it.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG

Debt relief, or else.

THE MEXICAN LESSON

IF LATIN AMERICA descends into political chaos after a decade of economic crisis, it won't be for lack of warning. The recent election in Mexico is just the latest sign of the growing polarization and radicalization throughout Latin America, including countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, and Peru. The Reagan administration, still fixated on Nicaragua, has taken almost no heed, despite the fact that vital U.S. interests are at stake. And this administration's own economic policies on Latin America's foreign debt are a major cause of the deepening crisis.

The Mexican elections were remarkable for the large vote against the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), which has exercised one-party rule in Mexico for 59 years. The PRI candidate for president, Carlos Salinas, was nearly overwhelmed by a massive vote for the left-wing challenger Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. In fact, Salinas's narrow margin of victory over Cárdenas may have been due to vote fraud. The surge in support for Cárdenas came despite the PRI's huge advantages in media control and in voter turnout, and came from groups that have traditionally been "safe" for the PRI. The greatest shock came in Mexico City, where millions of government

workers and urban poor defected to Cárdenas.

Cárdenas's campaign was centered on a call for a moratorium on payments of Mexico's foreign debt, a proposal that resonated well with workers who have seen their real wages fall by 40 percent in the past five years, and who suffered through an inflation rate of 200 percent in 1987. Cárdenas tapped an anger that is sweeping not only Mexico, but the rest of Latin America as well, and that threatens to make the region virtually ungovernable. Since the early 1980s Latin America has experienced a profound economic crisis, resulting from poor economic management, a heavy debt owed to international banks, high world interest rates, and low export prices. This year inflation will reach 600 percent in Brazil and Peru, and 350 percent in Argentina. Throughout Latin America, the gradual improvement in living standards over a generation has been wiped out, and extreme poverty has risen sharply.

The economic crisis has swept away almost all governments in its wake. This was a healthy development in South America in the early 1980s, where military dictatorships in Argentina, Ecuador, Peru, and Uruguay were the first to succumb to the crisis. It has also been healthy for Mexico, where the crisis has opened up the political process for the first time in more than a half century. The problem now is that it is the democratic, centrist governments that are next in line to be swept away.

THE UNITED STATES has maintained a simple policy throughout the Latin American crisis. It has insisted that all countries continue to pay interest on their debts, and that at the same time they carry out economic reforms under the supervision of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. By now the strategy must be regarded as a failure. Not one of the democratic governments in Latin America has yet been able to manage the three-way miracle of paying the debt, reforming the economy, and maintaining political power long enough to reap the economic payoff of the reforms. The rules of the game, as laid down by the United States and the IMF, have proved untenable. The United States—a debtor nation in which it is politically impossible to impose reforms of one-tenth the severity of those our government imposes on far poorer nations—should not find this surprising.

In direct economic terms, the debt payments have deprived governments of the funds needed to provide the most basic public services and public investment, and have forced governments to resort to printing money in order to meet local expenses. The result has been the collapse of public services and explosive inflation.

Politically, the payments on the debt have undermined the case for the very reforms that the United States is urging. Although market-oriented reforms are essential to the future prosperity of these nations, that is not the way it appears to citizens suffering the shock of losing their subsidies, protections, and guaranteed prices. To them, every proposed reform seems to be for the sake of foreign creditors. Economic reforms to raise exports, for example, which almost always lower urban wages initially, appear

to the public to be a strategy to enrich Citibank and Manufacturers Hanover at the expense of the workers. Budget cuts, which are needed to restrain inflation, are attacked as an unjust way to increase payments to foreign banks.

Cárdenas's political success in urging a debt moratorium is being matched in almost every Latin American democracy. Governments that play by the international rules and continue to pay their debts are finding themselves undermined by growing and powerful opposition parties that make a popular case for a debt moratorium. Already, governments in several countries, including Ecuador and Peru, have come to power on a program of limiting debt payments. Other sitting governments have read the public mood and have similarly opted for a unilateral moratorium. In Argentina, Brazil, and now Mexico, the debt is still paid, but the political pressures against repayment continue to mount.

In the end, the tough U.S. line on the debt will surely backfire. The banks have already watched the market value of their claims on Latin America collapse as the political atmosphere there becomes ever more hostile. But the stakes are much higher than bank profits. The uncompromising U.S. policies on the debt threaten to generate a continent of anti-American governments that will not only *unilaterally* stop paying the debt, but will also embrace a host of other nationalistic and anti-reformist policies to

their long-term detriment and ours. If the United States continues to insist on debt repayment at all costs, we might well re-create a continent of "friendly" authoritarian governments that, like Pinochet's Chile, manage to pay their debts through a policy of severe internal repression. High inflation and an ascendant left-wing opposition are the factors that have typically provoked military interventions in Latin American politics.

Mexico is the place and now is the time to try a more sensible approach. The interest costs on Mexico's debts are simply too high for a centrist regime to manage. A straight-forward deal should therefore be struck. If Salinas continues on the path of economic and political reforms that he has charted, the U.S. government should broker a deal in which the interest payments on Mexico's bank debt would be cut in half, down to the level at which Mexico could both grow and pay. The World Bank could help to guarantee the debt payments that remain. The international banks would indeed lose half their money, but they would cut the growing risk of losing it all. And the rest of us would be spared the profound risk of political and economic chaos on our border.

JEFFREY SACHS

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Why the sudden outburst of race hatred?

POLITICAL PERVERSITY IN CHICAGO

BY JONATHAN BRENT

Chicago

The late Harold Washington has become something of a folk hero in Chicago, where he was mayor for about four-and-a-half years. Next April his 67th birthday will be commemorated with a competition among Chicago high school students to choose the best artistic representation of Mayor Washington, whose "winning spirit will be depicted *with reverence and dignity* . . . in a manner becoming a folk hero." The organization sponsoring this event has become known as the "Olympics of the Mind." Since Washington's death last November a number of such olympics have been staged in Chicago under the auspices of City Hall.

Despite the near beatification of Washington, many questions remain about the merits of his administration, questions that haunt the black community's relations with whites, and Jews in particular. There was, of course, a great

outpouring of emotion at his death. A line of people, black and white, many blocks long filed past Washington's casket. Jesse Jackson flew to Chicago, embraced Louis Farrakhan, swayed back and forth beside Washington's body to the chant of "We Shall Overcome," and held hands with local politicians. But this show of solidarity was deceptive.

On November 18, 1987, about a week before Washington's fatal heart attack, Steve Cokely, a relatively obscure aide to Chicago Alderman Eugene Sawyer (who later became acting mayor), attacked Washington in a speech at the Final Call, the Chicago headquarters of Louis Farrakhan's Nation of Islam. Cokely, who had been fired by another alderman in 1985 for publicly denouncing Columbus Day as a "racist holiday," also attacked Jesse Jackson, Walter Payton, Whoopi Goldberg, University of Chicago sociologist Bill Wilson, Michael Jordan, and several other prominent blacks.

Cokely also described the complicity of the police with white power interests: "You know what police mean. Po-

lice mean anything come down. I'm with you. You shot that nigger in the head, we'll put that gun on him. That's right. . . . Wilson Goode was with the police too. Mayor Daley was with the police. Harold, you're with the police, too?" (Laughter, applause.)

He then criticized Washington for expressing concern over a neo-Nazi window-smashing of Jewish businesses and synagogues on Chicago's North Side:

Them four little windows that was broke on them four little Jewish businesses up north by some Jew who busted the window, who made the mayor run up there and pledge to stop all the window busting. Made that nigger go up there. They bustin' people's heads in our community. He went up there for some windows. . . . But this nigger [Washington] up there placating the Jews on some windows. When infant mortality went up, he didn't come out and pledge to help the babies. He renounced the statistics. . . . Get up north there, nigger, and go out there and repudiate this window breaking.

The November speech was one of a series of four speeches delivered between 1985 and 1987 at the Final Call. When these speeches became headline news in Chicago in May 1988, they led to the Anti-Defamation League's demand for Cokely's dismissal. In the four speeches, Cokely had vehemently attacked both Jesse Jackson and Harold Washington for retaining Jewish advisers. He had alleged that Jewish physicians were injecting black children with the AIDS virus. He had denounced Christopher Columbus as a Hispanic Jew, described the cross as a symbol of white supremacy, and accused Jews of creating a "secret society," the purpose of which is to form a world government controlled by the Jews that would oppress blacks. "The Jew," Cokely had stated, "hopes to one day reign forever." The ADL did not protest Cokely's right to make such speeches. It insisted only that he should not remain a paid employee of the acting mayor. The tapes of Cokely's speeches remain on sale at the Final Call.

In the wake of the media's publication of these "remarks" in May, many prominent black leaders expressed solidarity with Cokely either on the ground of freedom of speech or of the truth in what he said. Not one black elected official dared contradict Cokely. The Rev. Herbert Martin, who is now, ironically, executive director of the Council of Human Relations in Chicago, declared that he thought Cokely's comments had a "ring of truth." "They're inflammatory, yeah," Martin said. "But sometimes the truth is rather inflammatory." Nor did Martin or any other black leader call for the firing of Cokely. Acting Mayor Sawyer himself took no action for almost an entire week and then was forced to fire Cokely when he refused to resign.

BUT IN THE clamor over Cokely's speeches that followed their disclosure to the press in May, only the overtly anti-Semitic statements received much attention. As the black leadership closed ranks behind Cokely, his previous attacks on Washington went entirely unremarked. Scarcely two weeks later black leaders would storm the Art Institute of Chicago to protect the image of

the "great Harold Washington," yet no word was spoken about Cokely's anti-Washington diatribe. The media chose to view Cokely's derision of Washington, Jackson, and other blacks as only a detail in the larger picture of his anti-Semitism. In fact, underlying Cokely's anti-Semitism, and perhaps that of other black leaders, are the schisms in the black community and a terrible feeling of powerlessness despite the appearance of power.

Within hours of Washington's heart attack, the aldermen and their aides explained on television news that electing an acting mayor was a "black thing" and that white politicians had best stay away. Chicago's new acting mayor had to be black. The white aldermen did as they were told, but what ensued was a vicious conflict among competing black groups rather than unified political action. Bomb threats at City Hall, wild demonstrations of support and opposition—angers and hatreds that once were thought to be directed only at whites now rent the black community. Eugene Sawyer was eventually voted into office by a coalition of black, white, and Hispanic aldermen. An old ward heeler from the Daley era, he was viewed as more manipulable than his opponent, who had a broader base of exclusively black support.

SAWYER'S reluctance to fire Cokely demonstrates how extremism enters the mainstream political system. His weak and indecisive manner, his lame excuses for both Cokely and himself—such as declaring that Cokely didn't really "mean in his heart" what he had said about Jews—exposed the moral and political inadequacy of his administration, but it also indicated the immense pressures under which he must work. Although Farrakhan's separatist and extremist group, before whom Cokely delivered his speeches, is estimated to have no more than 5,000 to 10,000 adherents, no black leader in Chicago, including Jesse Jackson, could openly repudiate Cokely's anti-Semitic propaganda. By not opposing Cokely's statements directly and immediately dismissing him, Sawyer legitimized them. He appeared to act not on principle but under pressure from the ADL, something that could only enhance black suspicions of Jewish influence and power. However, if the political consensus on which his administration was built were strong, he would not have felt the need to equivocate and delay.

The old civil rights coalition from the '60s that produced Harold Washington and Jesse Jackson has broken down, and nothing has taken its place. There can be no leadership without a constituency of those who agree to be led, and in Chicago such a unified constituency no longer exists, not least because of the anti-Semitism unleashed by Cokely and his associates.

Many years ago James Baldwin noted that anti-Semitism was a feature of black communities that had never even seen a Jew. The circumstances in Chicago make the irrational nature of recent black anti-Semitism quite clear. Jews constituted the single largest bloc of whites to vote for Washington in his two elections. Without the Jewish liberal vote, Washington could not have been elected. Jewish aldermen were the first whites to side with Washington in

his battles with other white and generally bigoted political leaders. The power structure of Chicago has never been in the hands of Jews, but rather in the hands of the Irish. The specific charges made by Cokely about Jewish doctors, financiers, and the secret society have nothing whatever to do with actual conditions in the city. The Jew depicted by Cokely derives from a combination of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* and Stalin's doctors' plot, not the unfairness of Jewish landlords or discriminatory hiring practices.

IN CHICAGO the rise of black anti-Semitism has resulted from the unstable political structure of the black community. The title of Cokely's November 18 speech was "Compulsory Education is Mandatory Strangulation." Cokely's overt thesis consists of variations on the Marxist idea that education is an institution of social control. Underlying this, however, is an anguished subtext whose leitmotiv is the inability of black leaders to improve conditions for blacks without sacrificing their identities as black people. Cokely describes the situation of many blacks who attempt to become "colorless" and are then met by the inveterate racism of the white community. But this perception is distorted by the assumption that white opposition is always racist and that failure is always the result of white supremacist intervention.

Cokely berates both Washington and Jackson for yielding to the pressure of white society to become "colorless":

There is a "white" guy [Professor Bill Wilson], a brother at the University of Chicago wrote a book called *The Declining Significance of Race*. What kind of dumb nigger is this? Talking about race is no factor. Can you imagine I can just look at you and tell you what you are, and he gonna tell me that don't mean nothing. . . . This is a new theory being propagated in the midst of the killing off the race.

Cokely then quotes Jackson: "America is more colorblind than it was four years ago." Cokely asks, "America is more colorblind, now what does colorblind mean? Like not motivated by race, it sounds like. . . . So now Jesse is alluding to the fact that he's reinforcing the rest of the colorless crowd, the whole clear generation." According to Cokely, such colorblindness is impossible. Therefore, surrounding himself with white, particularly Jewish, advisers is a form of racial suicide for Jackson. The same was true for Washington.

Chicago remains perhaps the most segregated city in the United States, its public schools have been branded the worst in the nation, and the infant mortality rate among blacks is worse than that of Costa Rica. Cokely gives voice to the anger and despair that pervades the city's black community. During Washington's administration the conditions for black school children, black mothers, black teenagers, and unemployed adults did not improve and in many ways continued to deteriorate. How could this happen with a black mayor? Cokely's answer is simple: Washington sacrificed himself to the white power structure and then was betrayed by it.

Embattled, without clearly defined political or social goals, without being able to exercise the power apparently invested in them, most black leaders in Chicago must sym-

pathize with Cokely's anger and perceive the truth in his depiction of their situation. This is the danger of Cokely's activism. The task of Chicago's black leaders must be to dissociate the problems Cokely articulates from the causes he identifies. Doing so, however, they run the risk of exposing themselves in a politically vulnerable way. Either Harold Washington was deficient in dealing with the problems (as they were themselves), or the problems are too enormous to be solved. If this is so, then much of the dream of "We Shall Overcome" begins to crumble. Much better to let the Jews take the heat.

WHY THE JEWS? If the real problems of the black community do not have to do with Jews, why are Jews the target? Farrakhan's 1984 treatment of Hitler goes some way to explain:

Here come the Jews don't like Farrakhan, so they call me Hitler. Well, that's a good name. Hitler was a very great man. He wasn't great for me as a black person, but he was a great German. Now, I'm not proud of Hitler's evil against Jewish people, but that's a matter of record. He rose Germany up from nothing. Well, in a sense you could say there's similarity in that we are rising our people up from nothing. But don't compare me with your wicked killers.

On the one hand, this reveals great admiration for Hitler for being the man who "rose Germany up from nothing." On the other hand, there is a distancing from Hitler's "evil" against Jews. It's a delicate balance. But the real point is that evil is displaced, focused on the Jews, leaving the black community innocent—pure victim.

Cokely states: "We've been slaughtered, killed, beat up, locked down 400 years and we the victim, and we will be accused of being racist when we oppressed nobody." This thinking renders all who believe it guilt-free, not responsible for their destinies, and therefore outside the rule of law. He who is pure victim can do anything. Perhaps the most important function of Cokely's and Farrakhan's rhetoric is the very simple one of making whoever believes it feel good about himself by relieving the black community of moral responsibility.

This structure of thinking and feeling has indeed produced real political and social consequences. Within two weeks of the Cokely affair a group of black aldermen marched with police escort to the School of the Art Institute and stripped a satiric painting of Washington off the wall in a private exhibition of student work, the purpose of which was a fellowship competition. A version of "The Emperor's New Clothes," the portrait depicted Washington in women's underwear. Denounced as an "offensive and degrading" work, it was a clumsy satire directed at those who mythologize Washington while drawing on the rumors that he was homosexual.

The City Council voted to condemn it before any alderman had even seen it. Instead of attempting to quiet their community's fears and angers, which had been ignited by mere hearsay, the black leaders without exception chose to exploit them. The Rev. Willie Barrow of Operation PUSH accused the Art Institute of being a racist institution. U.S.

Representative Gus Savage asked why there had been "more concern about the right of a painter to defame the memory of the great Harold Washington than the right of Steve Cokely to feed his family [by retaining his job in the mayor's office]." Alderman Ed Smith suggested that there would be a "fight in this city" if the painting was allowed back on the wall. The acting mayor declared that he "hated" the painting and felt that putting it up was an abuse of the First Amendment. However, because of his vehemence and continual presence, Alderman Alan Streeter became something of a spokesman for the entire black community:

The fellow who drew that picture is Jewish. The Jewish community tried to keep our people silent, [yet] we cannot speak out against an injustice. . . . It's all related. . . . I feel the fellow is a Jewish person who is defaming the mayor that I love. . . . We will not tolerate that picture hanging on the wall, Constitution or no Constitution. There is a higher moral law. . . . I don't care what the Supreme Court says or the local judicial system says, that painting will never go back up on that wall. If it does, I'll tear it down myself.

The artist in question is not Jewish. But not one black leader corrected Streeter. Nor has Streeter issued an apology for this defamatory statement. When confronted with the information that seizing the painting broke at least three state and one federal felony statute, Streeter's response was that "as a race we must protect each other and defend each other." He said that the "law of common sense, morality, and decency," which somehow he felt he represented, transcended the First Amendment. Why? Because blacks were not originally included in the First Amendment. The courts, he stated, do not apply to this situation because they were always "against blacks."

Streeter's comments uncannily echoed much of Cokely's rhetoric. Cokely had decried "colorless" behavior that he

claimed came from "a new theory being propagated in the midst of the killing off the race." Streeter declared: "As a race we must protect each other and defend each other." Cokely had denounced schools as agents of social control. Black leaders attacked the Art Institute as racist. But Cokely's most pathetic indictment of Washington and black leadership generally came when he pointed out that the Chicago school system was rated worst in the country. "It says that we at the bottom one percent in the nation in school scores. The bottom one percent. That means there's 99 percent standing on top of us. And we got a black superintendent and a black mayor, and we at one percent." As if to prove Cokely wrong, black elected officials lashed out in an attempt to show that a black mayor and a black administration could make a difference.

The Art Institute incident had more to do with the political conditions within the black community than with black-white relations, let alone with questions of artistic taste. Seizing the painting was an attempt—alarming and pathetic at the same time—to recover some sense of the power and purpose of actual public leaders by those who still are largely, to use Ralph Ellison's phrase, "invisible" men torn by self-hatred, and a sense of vulnerability.

In the wake of the Cokely and Art Institute commotions, blacks and Jews have begun to call for "dialogue," but this is only a placebo. The real problems lie within the political structure of the black community. It must come to some consensus about its aims and aspirations as well as a means for achieving them. But the black community can never be seen in isolation from the white, and the white political structure must also integrate itself with the black. Today it is not at all clear how these changes will come about. What is clear is that if they do not, greater extremism, anti-Semitism, and political turmoil are inevitable.

The conservative movement and the AIDS virus.

THE POLITICAL USES OF AN EPIDEMIC

BY MICHAEL J. FUMENTO

IN THE TRAGEDY of AIDS, some conservatives believe they have found a shiny weapon with which to restore traditional sexual morality. They wish to recapture their vision of a better world—one where homosexuality is pushed back into the closet (or further), where chastity, monogamy, and sexual morality are revered, and where sexual behavior is once again within the domain of law.

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But in order to do so, they have been forced to distort the true nature of the epidemic. They will find, however, that the epidemic will not change to fit their wishes. Whatever short-term gains they make through disinformation will eventually disappear and leave their causes worse off than before. They have already victimized the sufferers of the disease. Another victim may be American conservatism itself.

At the root of conservative confusion over AIDS policy is confusion over the AIDS virus itself. There are essentially three theories of transmissibility. Theory One assumes

that in addition to being blood-borne, the contagion can be transmitted casually, that it can be passed through mere close proximity as well as sexual intercourse. Theory Two assumes that HIV (the AIDS virus) is transmitted efficiently through both homosexual and heterosexual sex. Theory Three is that because HIV is blood-borne, it will continue to plague those who exchange fluids through anal sex and needles, but will pose far less of a threat to the general heterosexual population.

As a matter of logic, all three of these theories can't be right. Either AIDS is a "gay plague" or it's not. Either it is just a fluke that AIDS emerged in the gay community first or it is confined primarily to homosexuals (and drug users) by its very nature. Similarly, either AIDS is casually transmitted and hence no more a behavioral contagion than tuberculosis or influenza, or it's not. Yet conservatives frequently combine all three models depending on their state of confusion—and depending on their agenda.

THEORY THREE is correct. Ten years after the first heterosexual AIDS cases began showing up in New York City, AIDS remains confined almost exclusively to homosexuals, intravenous (i.v.) drug abusers, recipients of blood products prior to 1986, and their steady sexual partners. Only about two percent of all diagnosed AIDS cases in this country have been attributed to heterosexual transmission in native-born Americans, a figure that has held steady for several years now. In New York City only eight males have been identified as having gotten AIDS from heterosexual sex. If other health departments interviewed patients as carefully as New York and could thus screen out those who claim sex with women as their only risk when in fact they've had sex with men or shared needles, it's quite possible that they'd find fewer than a score of such heterosexual men in the country. Blood tests for HIV infection among military applicants, blood donors, and hospital patients also indicate that the problem remains tightly confined to a few groups.

Most conservative leaders and writers have remained impervious to these facts. While writers such as George Will and Norman Podhoretz have insisted on Theory Three (the correct one), Theory Two (easy heterosexual transmission) holds sway with the Reagan administration. Secretary of Education William Bennett and White House Director of Policy Development Gary Bauer have thrown in their lot with Theory Two, as to some extent has President Reagan, who has declared that "AIDS is surreptitiously spreading throughout our population."

The president is advised in these matters by Bauer and assistant for domestic policy Kenneth Cribb. These conservatives, advised often by the kookiest of scientists, have used the theory to push programs from mandatory premarital testing to chastity-based sex education in schools, all to combat a virus that, according to the theory, spreads about as efficiently as syphilis. In fact, syphilis is so infectious that you can get it on the back of your hand. The infection rate of this microbe during coitus is about 20 percent to 50 percent, depending on which sex it is being transmitted

to (sexually transmitted diseases are transmitted more easily from male to female). HIV has an infection rate estimated by Centers for Disease Control epidemiologist Dr. Thomas Peterman at less than 0.1 percent going from male to female and less than 0.05 percent going from female to male. Thus, for males syphilis appears to be 400 times more infectious than AIDS; for females 500 times. Yet syphilis is the Reagan administration's favored analogy.

Republican presidential candidates Jack Kemp, Pierre du Pont, Alexander Haig, and Pat Robertson all supported mandatory premarital testing, on the syphilis prevention model. Two states have complied, and many others have such legislation pending. Senator Jesse Helms and Representative William Dannemeyer, both normally fierce champions of federalism, have introduced legislation to penalize states that refuse to mandate premarital testing. (Dannemeyer has deluged Congress with AIDS legislation, all of which remains bottled up in committee.)

We now have some evidence of how such strategies work. Couples preparing for marriage, by virtue of that fact, are in an extremely low-risk group for HIV infection. Some may be drug abusers or bisexuals, but few will be homosexuals. Thus in Illinois, by the end of May, of an estimated 60,000 tested marriage applicants, only six were HIV-positive. The price of these tests vary, but they average over \$100 for each individual. Thus it costs an average of more than \$1 million per AIDS case detected. Testing clinics are doing handsomely, but it's hard to see what benefit accrues to the people of Illinois. Detecting cases doesn't necessarily prevent even one case of AIDS. Testing premaritals simply because they have to get a licence is like the drunk who looked for his lost keys under the street lamp because the light was better there.

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT, under Bennett, distributes AIDS information materials to government and private institutions; included is a thick package detailing the syphilis control measures instituted under President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The department urges that similar measures be taken against AIDS. Bennett, the administration member most active in promoting monogamy and abstinence as a method of preventing AIDS, has also predictably taken the lead in criticizing the use of condoms. He publicized the term "condomania." Disguising moral indignation behind the shield of practicality, Bennett has tried to impeach the value of condoms in preventing AIDS. Studies have been dragged out demonstrating condom usage failure rates. Most frequently cited are the Planned Parenthood survey showing a ten percent failure rate for condoms as contraceptives and a University of Miami study showing a 17 percent failure rate in preventing transmission of the virus in partners of men infected with HIV.

A booklet circulated by Education Department staffers warns in all capitals: "DON'T ENGAGE IN INTIMATE CONTACT AT ALL. IF YOU HAVE HAD THAT KIND OF CONTACT IN THE PAST, STOP NOW. THAT IS THE ONLY 'SAFE SEX.' IF YOU ENGAGE IN CLOSE SEXUAL CONDUCT, YOU ARE PLAYING RUSSIAN ROULETTE WITH YOUR LIFE." The book also declares: "The Black

Plague was a disease that during the 14th century killed one-third or more of the people who live in Europe. . . . [Unlike AIDS] the plague killed only one out of every four people who caught it." Apart from the fatuousness of comparing an insect-borne disease with a blood-borne one, the mathematics are impossible.

Bennett and his allies replace "safe sex" with the phrase "safer sex," because, after all, one can never be 100 percent sure that one's partner is uninfected, nor 100 percent sure that a condom will be an effective barrier. Bennett et al. favor the term "Russian roulette." The only truly safe behavior is described as chastity until marriage, and then monogamy. One difficulty is immediately apparent. Urging homosexuals to remain chaste until marriage is obviously problematic. Because heterosexual transmission of AIDS is so rare, emphasizing chastity and monogamy as AIDS preventatives is clearly misfocused.

EVEN FOR that two percent who get AIDS heterosexually, Bennett's advice is problematic. First, since most of these two percent are female partners of drug users and probably tend to share the addicts' penchant for instant gratification, the chastity message is unlikely to affect them. Second, strange as it may seem in light of the campaign against promiscuity, the overwhelming number of heterosexually transmitted AIDS cases occur not in people engaging in "casual sex" but as a result of monogamous or near-monogamous relationships with i.v. drug users or, much less commonly, with bisexuals. This is because in a population with a low percentage of infected individuals and where transmission is highly difficult, only a regular relationship can expose one frequently to infection.

It follows that the same arguments conservative moralists use against condoms also apply to monogamy. There is no such thing as "safe" monogamy, because there is no way to know for certain that one's partner is neither cheating nor shooting up. Studies done in recent decades estimate extramarital infidelity rates upward from 21 percent for females and 26 percent for males. Those who tell us not to place our faith in "one thin sheet of latex" might better trust latex than a spouse.

Monogamy may be no more effective than condoms in preventing AIDS among heterosexuals. Both have their place, and that place is limited. Jack Kemp pointed out in an address that there's no need, moral concerns aside, for condom education for third-graders. But there's also no need, moral concerns aside, for impressing upon third-graders the importance of chastity, at least in order to prevent AIDS, for the same reason: AIDS is not being transmitted between third-graders. When engaged in properly, both condom usage and monogamy can reduce what is for most heterosexuals virtually no risk to absolutely no risk.

The director of a company that produces chastity-urging videos for schools (which don't even mention homosexuality but do warn against the terrors of deep kissing) is undaunted by the astronomical odds against acquiring HIV through intercourse with other drug-free heterosexuals. "If there is one chance in ten million that a kid will catch

AIDS, he shouldn't take it." Of course, to avoid such odds with everything that could kill us would end life as we know it. This year, more than one in 5,000 Americans will die in automobile accidents, or about 2,000 in ten million. About 500 in ten million will die in accidental falls, while over 200 in ten million will die from accidental drowning. Are we thus to conclude that there is no such thing as "safe driving" or "safe walking" or "safe swimming," or even "safer driving" or "safer walking" or "safer swimming"?

What the video producer is saying is that, to him, extra-marital sex has zero utility. Unfortunately, he doesn't have the honesty to come out and say so. It is dishonesty that underlies the entire moralistic scheme to exaggerate the heterosexual AIDS problem. Frustrated with the failure of the message "Sex will cost you your soul," the moralists have cynically replaced it with "Sex will cost you your life." Moral suasion is replaced by mortal terror.

One prominent conservative columnist, while acknowledging the low risk of AIDS to heterosexuals, nevertheless confided to me that he saw nothing wrong with the "chastity or death" message. He saw the end as being so important as to justify a "whatever works" approach. Yet such an approach is fraught with danger. At some point, sexually active heterosexuals are going to wake up and find they're still alive. Their chaste-out-of-fear brethren will see the same. What then? If the moral position is abandoned for a pragmatic one, how can the moral one be reclaimed once the reason for pragmatism is gone?

CONSERVATIVES HAVE to a great extent ignored the i.v.-drug aspect of AIDS, presumably because i.v.-drug use has nothing to do with syphilis or chastity. Given the overemphasis on heterosexual AIDS cases, this is rather amazing. Almost 60 percent of i.v.-drug abusers with AIDS are exclusively heterosexual. Even in heterosexuals who acquired the disease through intercourse rather than through needle-sharing, drug use is the overwhelming cause. About 85 percent of heterosexually transmitted cases occur in the partners of i.v.-drug abusers. Virtually 100 percent of males infected through heterosexual intercourse were the partners of i.v.-drug abusers. Yet no conservative member of Congress has introduced legislation dealing directly with the AIDS/i.v.-drug connection, and none has signed on to the bill introduced by Representative Charles Rangel that does deal with it.

Mention of the AIDS/i.v.-drug abuse connection is almost absent from the speeches of Bennett and Bauer. Bennett's booklet, "AIDS and the Education of Our Children," was put out last October. Almost two million copies have been printed. In this booklet, 15 sentences concern drugs only, 13 concern both sex and drugs, three sentences concern exclusively homosexual intercourse, and two exclusively heterosexual intercourse. By contrast, a whopping 79 sentences make reference to sex in general, without mentioning drugs and without differentiating between homosexual and heterosexual sex. (Of these, 18 are devoted to disparaging condom usage.) Nowhere is anal sex mentioned. What can be said of a man who complains bitterly

that the surgeon general's report was incomplete because it did not mention condom failure when his report fails to mention that over 95 percent of sexually transmitted AIDS cases occur from anal sex? Nowhere is the reader told that AIDS is virtually nonexistent in heterosexual men whose partners do not inject drugs. The silence is all the more amazing given the Reagan administration's usual habit of using any evidence to inveigh against the "epidemic" of drug use in the United States.

According to *Chicago Tribune* reporter John Crewdson, at an October meeting at which White House officials and officials from CDC were present, Bennett confronted CDC Director James Mason. Bennett said, "You mean this thing is not exploding into the heterosexual community?" Dr. Mason replied, "No, it's not." Whereupon Bennett said, "Well, why have you been telling everybody that it is?" Why indeed? But why did Bennett then proceed with the mailing of his booklet, with a reprinting several months later?

AS UNFOUNDED as the syphilis theory is, the casual contact theory is nothing short of bizarre. And unlike the syphilis theory, it appears to be almost the sole domain of the right. Because responsible public officials and reporters will not credit the casual contagion model, its proponents are prone to conspiracy theories. The guru of the casual contagion theory is John Seale. Although he is a medical doctor, he gains most respectability from being a member of Britain's Parliament. He has testified before a committee of the California General Assembly at the behest of conservative Republican legislators, and also elsewhere at the behest of New York Governor Mario Cuomo.

Seale submitted a report to the House of Commons in May 1987, in which he admitted—indeed, trumpeted—that the material therein was completely in conflict with the reports in British and American medical journals. Among Seale's claims was that "male homosexual contact of the finger, penis, or tongue with the rectal wall of another man transmits the virus very easily. . . . Moderately efficient means of transmission include mouth-to-mouth and genital contact [and] oral salivary contact between small children."

Such a kook would be only amusing if he weren't taken so seriously on the mainstream American right. His influence extends beyond fringe publications such as Reed Irvine's "Accuracy in Media" newsletter and the *Washington Inquirer*, which have made much play of Seale. Wayne Lutton, writing a scathing critique of "The Surgeon General's Report on AIDS" in *National Review*, quoted Seale as saying that "the genetic information contained in [AIDS'] tiny strip of RNA has all that is needed to render the human race extinct within 50 years." He mentioned none of Seale's quirks. Lutton reprinted Seale's California testimony in a book he co-authored on AIDS, again without disclaimer. Last December presidential candidate Pat Robertson, in an interview with New Hampshire's *Concord Monitor*, declared that "if say, we're in a room with 25 people with AIDS and they're breathing various things

into the atmosphere, the chance of somebody catching it has become quite strong." Robertson's source, according to a spokesman, was Dr. John Seale.

Other conservatives, such as nationally syndicated columnist Gregory Fossedal, don't even feel the need to cite a physician or theorist like Seale to push the casual transmission line. Fossedal wrote in one column:

Polls show that a majority of Americans think they are being lied to about the disease, and they're right, as the provocative book *The AIDS Cover-up?* suggests. They can tell that doctors are telling the truth but not the whole truth when they say there's no evidence AIDS can be spread through casual contact. (There's nothing proving it can't, and common sense suggests erring on caution's side.)

Fossedal merely states the logical proposition that one can't prove a negative. That AIDS is not casually transmitted is demonstrated in the same way as so many other negatives we accept are, by lack of evidence on the other side. AIDS has been recognized as an epidemic for seven years now. During that time there has yet to be identified a single case of casual transmission.

THE BOOK cited by Fossedal, *The AIDS Cover-up?*, was written by Gene Antonio, a heretofore unknown former minister, and published by the Catholic Ignatius Press. It has become a cult classic, with over 200,000 copies sold. It makes no bones about its purpose being to terrify, and it succeeds. "I got a copy of it from my dentist," related a friend of mine. After which she, a virgin until her marriage a year earlier, promptly got an HIV test. *The AIDS Cover-up?* has been offered as a selection of the Conservative Book Club, a popular book-of-the-month organization for conservatives. Copies of the text are displayed prominently on conservatives' bookshelves and desks throughout Washington. If you are a conservative journalist who writes about AIDS, like me, you are constantly plagued with the question: "Have you read Gene Antonio's book?" Antonio has written updates that are circulated by the Department of Education. He has spoken at meetings of Phyllis Schlafly's Eagle Forum. His agenda is also stridently anti-homosexual, portraying gay people as agents of human destruction.

The AIDS Cover-up? cites Seale 13 times. But Antonio is fully capable of apocalypticism himself. He uses the average doubling time of AIDS cases (12 months at that time, now thought to be at least 15) and extrapolates that as many as eight million Americans would be infected by the end of 1987 and 64 million by the end of 1990. Antonio appears ignorant of the standard epidemiological curve, which indicates that as a new infection spreads, it slows down as the most vulnerable potential victims are struck and only harder targets are left. Eventually the rate peaks, drops, and levels off, as with syphilis or gonorrhea, or drops almost to a point of nonexistence, as with bubonic plague and influenza epidemics. (In the most AIDS-afflicted city in the United States, New York, the rate of new cases among homosexuals has already leveled off.) Antonio has also peddled an absurd comparison between AIDS and a completely unrelated lentivirus

in sheep that can be transmitted through coughing.

One source quoted in *The AIDS Cover-Up?* probably constitutes the most egregious AIDS scare article printed in the mainstream conservative press. The March 1986 *American Spectator* featured an article claiming that 30 percent of all men patronize prostitutes, that cow's milk could transmit the virus (even were this true, the heat of pasteurization would kill HIV), and that AIDS can be transmitted by coughing. After summarizing the various categories of persons at risk, the article concludes ominously, "Who will be left?" To which the apparent answer is "nobody." Later, the *Spectator* ran an article by a former special adviser to Margaret Thatcher calling for compulsory universal testing with enforced isolation for the infected. A half year later, though, when the authors proposed a follow-up, the magazine was more wary. "I was beginning to notice no one was dying," managing editor Wladyslaw Pleszczynski told me.

THE *Wall Street Journal*, with the most prestigious conservative op-ed page in the country, has run two pieces advocating the heterosexual AIDS breakout theme. One was an anti-prostitution article in which the author, asserting that prostitution was no longer "victimless," claimed without citing any source that "between 1,000 and 10,000 men will become infected with the AIDS virus this year by having sex with female prostitutes." A year later in New York City, which has more heterosexual AIDS cases and probably more prostitutes than any city in the country, a total of eight men have been identified as having acquired AIDS sexually from women, prostitutes or otherwise. Another *Journal* op-ed was written by Katie Leishman, pushing the theory that AIDS is really syphilis. In an editorial just last year, the *Journal* also stated, "An African-style epidemic is certainly possible, especially with a mutation of the virus." (In fact, no virus known has ever mutated so greatly as to change its mode of transmission.) The *Journal's* op-ed page has yet to publish a piece challenging the heterosexual epidemic myth.

The mainstream journal *Conservative Digest* is also not above using fanciful statistics. It reported that 1.5 million homosexual and bisexual men in the United States were infected with HIV and that 20 percent of these men were married and had passed the virus on to their wives. In fact, the official CDC estimate released nine months later indicated 625,000 to 1.1 million homosexual and bisexual men infected, a figure that many believe to be too high. As to their 300,000 infected wives, while CDC has no estimate of this, as of July only 1,500 full-blown AIDS cases were reported to have been infected through heterosexual intercourse. Of those, about 15 percent, or 225, appeared to have been infected by a bisexual.

The Rev. Jerry Falwell has employed all three AIDS transmission theories, calling for "immediate action [or] AIDS will prove to be the final epidemic—with millions dying each year—including your loved ones." Falwell makes no bones that the virus is being spread by evil practices of perverted sodomites. So is he saying that our loved ones are homosexuals? Or is he adopting Theory Two, in which

case he must be saying our loved ones are humping like bunnies—not a very nice thing to say to someone on the Moral Majority direct mail list. Or is he saying the virus is casually transmitted, in which case why is the solution abstinence and monogamous marriages?

The honorary national chairman of the AIDS Prevention Institute, a chastity-pushing organization, is singer Pat Boone. The newsletter contains such admonitions as: "Save sex for marriage! You owe it to your future children!" Authorities such as Miss America 1988 are cited as calling for mandatory testing. A story in the newsletter tells the story of a heterosexually promiscuous young man whose glands remain swollen for more than a week. He sweats through an AIDS test that after an agonizing wait comes back negative. "Never again!" proclaims the prodigal youth. The newsletter terrifies heterosexuals into thinking they may be infected, then uses accounts of those needlessly terrified heterosexuals to needlessly terrify more heterosexuals.

CONSERVATIVES are not alone in exaggerating the terrors of the AIDS epidemic. Liberals have pushed the AIDS-doesn't-discriminate line in order to advance their pre-epidemic causes, such as sex education in schools, and to generate more research funds and reduce the stigma of homosexuals. The difference is that liberals are winning, and conservatives will lose. And ironically, conservatives will lose because they've failed to act like conservatives. The AIDS crisis called for what used to be thought of as conservative virtues: caution before all the evidence is in and dispassion when weighing public policy. Instead, conservatives have reacted as hysterically as their radical adversaries. In the process, they also lost two old battles. They conceded that sex education in schools was necessary in order to promote their own moral agenda. (They will have trouble now arguing that it should not occur at all.) And by ignoring the drug connection while grossly over-emphasizing heterosexual sex, they also passed up a key opportunity to talk about the immorality of drug abuse.

When the *American Spectator* ran its first hysterical AIDS story, assistant managing editor Andrew Ferguson wrote this dissent. It stands in stark contrast with the attitude of the American conservative leadership:

This grotesque but recently vogueish hysteria is ludicrous on its face, or anyway it should seem so to someone who prizes the principles on which [conservatism] is supposed to be based—limited government, prudence, and individual responsibility, to name a few. It is simply the latest version of the totalitarian flimflam that is forever drawing believers from the ranks of the weak-minded and the perpetually alarmed.

The conservatism of which he writes is that not of a Bennett or a Bauer, but of a Burke.

Some of today's conservatives seem to have forgotten that it is a liberal precept that "in the long run, we shall all be dead." After the long run of AIDS, the vast majority of us will still be alive. What short-term victories could the conservatives gain that, come the morning after, could possibly be worth what they will lose? □

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Intriguings

It's time—past time—to pay attention to Ben Kingsley. Yes, he got an Oscar for his performance of Gandhi, which, so far as Oscars can be discussed rationally, he deserved. But that may have been as much Hollywood humanitarianism as recognition of art. Here let's attend to the actor.

After Gandhi, Kingsley played the

Pascali's Island
(Avenue)

Coming to America
(Paramount)

publisher-husband in *Betrayal* and the bookseller-adventurer in *Turtle Diary* (to deal only with his films). In his new film, *Pascali's Island*, playing a quite different sort of man from any of the above, he shows again an essential of the actor's art: concentration. That's an inadequate word—it's meant to suggest movement past imagination to the *employment* of imagination with every atom of resource.

Some recent TV news clips reminded me of these matters. The newscast showed Paul Newman, an admiration of mine, on his way to a Connecticut courthouse. It was Newman, all right, but it seemed an uninhabited body. The obvious fact that he wasn't acting at the moment doesn't explain enough: one doesn't really expect an unbroken continuum between performance and privacy. But seeing Newman on a screen when he was being shot without his interest—without even the quasi-performance of a talk-show appearance—underscored the quality that almost literally transforms him when he is working: immense, supermortal concentration.

No matter how relaxed a scene may seem, a chief reason that a good actor is good is that all of his or her physical and mental and secret being is focused on split-second after split-second of the character's existence, with an intensity that almost challenges the world to shake it. That fuzzy word "talent"—in acting, at least—may in some measure be defined as this power to summon the en-

tirety of one's self. In those news shots, Citizen Newman was, I'm sure, concentrating on driving his car; but that concentration was a whiff compared with what he summoned for the lawyer in *The Verdict* or the rancher in *Pocket Money* or the Indian in *Hombre*.

Kingsley, too, has this power, consummately. In *Gandhi*, which was the first time I saw him, he gave that well-meaning film most of what vitality it had by his sheer unswervable insistence on the reality of the man. With my first glimpse of him in his next film, *Betrayal*, I got my usual frisson from seeing good actors in contrasting roles: black magic had intervened to transmute the Hindu saint into a smooth Londoner seeping urbane cynicism.

Yet, even though Kingsley was concentrating on this role as tenaciously as before, he wasn't losing *himself* in it any more than he had in *Gandhi*. Kingsley was quite consciously summoning all of Kingsley to create someone else. The force of that contradiction, the presence of the actor utterly subscribed to being another person, helps to make good acting one of civilization's rewards.

Pascali's Island takes place in 1908. Kingsley plays a Turk, a police informer living on an Aegean island, reporting to Constantinople on unrest among the local Greeks. We first see him at his desk looking out the window of his apartment at the sea; then he is on the quay, carefully dressed, waiting for an incoming ship. He has "done" nothing up to this point, yet we feel that he has envisioned this character so thoroughly and is concentrating on him so wholly—even as he merely stands there—that a physical blow wouldn't distract him.

As the film proceeds, the various qualities of this man, Basil Pascali, unfold: soiled pride, humane cunning, acceptance of humiliation as his daily bread. Clearest of all is his near-religious hope that his reports to the sultan—he has sent them regularly for 20 years but they have never been acknowledged (though

he's been paid regularly)—have certified his place in the cosmos. Those reports are his secular prayers to a ruler he calls the Most High; he builds his life on those offerings, hoping for a response but never defecting when there is none.

Kingsley gives us all this with a body that can suggest dignity or seem to fade into the wallpaper, with his fine-grained voice, with eyes that can gleam or disappear. His features are extraordinary, strong without being striking. He looks like whatever he says he is, Gandhi or a smart Londoner or a Turk of shadowed origins.

For the first half hour or so, *Pascali's Island* seems a fit vehicle for this performance, but as it goes on, it loses shape and sense. This is especially frustrating because its shape is supposed to be the ultimate reason for Kingsley's performance. The screenplay, which is by the director James Dearden (who wrote *Fatal Attraction*), is derived from a novel by Barry Unsworth. I haven't read the book, but apparently its design is to present Pascali, living his civil-servant informer's life, sliding into a drama of political intrigue and sex, watching that drama play itself out, and though his life is now askew, continuing to write his civil-servant reports at the end. Literally, all this does happen, but the perspective shifts. In-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Big. At last—the boy-in-a-man's-body idea is used amusingly, particularly by Tom Hanks as the boy-man. (Reviewed 7/4/88)

A Handful of Dust. Evelyn Waugh's masterly novel, astringent yet with spiritual overtones, is now a beautiful film. The leading man and woman are OK; the rest of the cast, including Alec Guinness, are excellent. (6/27/88)

Rikky and Pete. Australian comedy, entertainingly farfetched. A brother and sister in their 20s head out from their Melbourne home into the desert. (6/20/88)

A World Apart. 1963, South Africa. Largely autobiographical—by the daughter of Communist activists in the anti-apartheid struggle. Politically a bit nebulous, but moving. (7/18&25/88)

SK

stead of being a few dramatic weeks in Pascali's life, it's a drama of other lives in which Pascali gets tangled. The irony is lost.

Another loss, as the story progresses, is its credibility. This island is ruled by a cruel pasha who has spies everywhere, yet the excavation and attempted theft of a 2,000-year-old statue are undertaken openly. Why did the clever people involved in the venture expect to get away with it?

Charles Dance plays a self-styled archaeologist who comes to the island to dig, and plays him with much of the Michael Caine dash that was such a pleasant surprise in *White Mischief*. Helen Mirren, as a Viennese artist who lives on the island, now possesses the charm and sexuality that she strained for in her early screen appearances.

Dearden directs generally well, evoking the oiliness of the island's life, its pomps and circumstances. But the slyness with which the film is freighted doesn't lead to enough and Kingsley's vivid performance doesn't get a good enough context.

Poor Eddie Murphy. *There's* an oxymoron for you, but it's what I felt after seeing *Coming to America*. He needs authoritative advisers. He's a whiz at brash, overwhelming, con-man comedy, and that's exactly what he's been cheated of a chance to do in his new film. The story—credited to Murphy himself—is about a quiet, reticent African prince, rich beyond disbelief, who flees a marriage arranged by his royal parents and comes to America to find real love—in a Queens, New York, ghetto. Every aspect of plot and character seems designed to handcuff and gag the high-voltage, outrageous comedian.

The director, John Landis, handled Murphy brightly in *Trading Places*, but here Landis's metronome is off. Everything is slow and thick. Malcolm Campbell and George Folsey Jr., the editors, cut according to an outdated rule book. We see A speak; then cut to B, who speaks; then back to A, etc. The editors even cut a couple of times to a fascinated dog in the middle of a loud quarrel between people.

Worse than all this is the acting. With one exception, the cast is black, but black and white, every one of them is embarrassingly bad. Even James Earl Jones, as Murphy's royal father, leans on the vocal booming that he does in TV commercial voice-overs and in Shakespeare.

Free Eddie Murphy! From the freedom that allowed him to do a dud like this. ☐

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HERBERT MUSCHAMP ON ARCHITECTURE

The Perils of Public Art

This past May some 3,000 members of the American Institute of Architects gathered in New York City for a three-day conference devoted, at least in title, to the theme of "Art in Architecture." Actually, this was the usual boilerplate affair, with workshops on structural technologies, lighting systems, and client relations, interspersed with guided tours, addresses from local dignitaries, and nights out on the town to see *Phantom* and *Les Mis*. Still, that the AIA chose this particular theme was significant. But what did it signify?

On the bottom line, the line on which professional groups tend to congregate, "Art in Architecture" meant "Paintings and Sculptures in Buildings"—a more or less literal allusion to the emergence of the art museum as the glamour project of the 1980s. And, like the boom in museum building, the allusion also no doubt reflected the inflation of contemporary art as the supreme status commodity among architecture's client class—and the parallel tendency among many architects today to represent themselves to the public as artists, not just boring old businessmen or would-be social engineers. "Art in Architecture" connoted art as architecture's inner essence, the secret heart of a profession traditionally governed by more practical concerns.

What all these connotations add up to is an amplification of the idea that a new harmony has recently grown up between the fields of art and architecture, an epochal development that deserves to be heralded as a new Renaissance. Instead of functioning as architecture's unmanageable Other, its rambunctious id, its visual or conceptual foil (the Henry Moore sculpture plopped down on the plaza outside the glass slab tower), art has finally reunited with architecture in a spirit of blissful reconciliation.

The most conspicuous issue of this happy union is public art. Today sculptors are eagerly collaborating with architects to produce lobby and street furniture of museum quality. Painters are mounting ladders to create murals in high rises all over town. Whole waterfronts are being reclaimed from urban blight by inspired partnerships between city planners and site-specific artists. Such projects were the major focus of

"Architectural Art: Affirming the Design Relationship," an exhibition organized by the American Craft Museum to coincide with the AIA's conference.

Quite a few worthwhile projects were on display in "Architectural Art," but at the service of a lamentable idea; for, like the Feel-good Era in national politics, the new harmony between art and architecture paints a picture that conceals more than it tells. At the Equitable Center in Manhattan (street furniture by Scott Burton, mural by Roy Lichtenstein, changing exhibitions by the Whitney Museum of American Art) the alliance between art and architecture was from its inception a business partnership, a corporate merger designed to persuade prospective tenants to pay premium rents outside the high-rent district. More recently, when the city sued developers of another high rise for exceeding the height allowed by local zoning, the developers turned to Art (in this case, a suite of dance studios) in a successful campaign to weaken the city's resolve to enforce its own laws. In such cases, Art in Architecture begins to look something like Jonah inside the whale; it becomes little more than a particularly flavorful chunk at the feast of urban development.

Yet it is not quite fair to blame architects for this kind of deception. Neither the architect, nor the artist, nor even the developer is responsible for art's usefulness as a means of bestowing prestige on commercial enterprises. Moreover, to limit criticism, as some writers do, to the economic underpinnings of public art projects, as though this constituted a radical exposé, is itself a kind of deception, since it can blind us to other reasons why artists and architects have been gravitating toward each other in recent years. If the relationship between art and architecture has changed, it is in large part due to a change in the cultural mythologies that have shaped the contours of these two fields and defined the boundaries between them.

According to these myths, architects are responsible for articulating the normative structure of a society, while the artist speaks for the individual mind. The artist's job is to give access to a subjective realm, to carve out a unique place in the world of competing, individual

selves. The architect's highest calling, on the other hand, is to identify visual and spatial codes that transcend the subjective perceptions of our separate selves. Together, art and architecture form an antithetical relationship, the classic opposition of individual to society.

But this division of cultural labor has been challenged by developments that have been taking place in art and architecture for some time. We value the city today not for its architectural embodiment of normative values, but on the contrary for its capacity to hold before our eyes differences in the ways societies and social groups have structured individual units of urban space that, together, make up a complex urban whole. Since 1966, when Robert Venturi published *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, many architects have followed Venturi's preference "for messy vitality over obvious unity."

On the other side, ever since Andy Warhol named his studio "the factory," artists have been working to dismantle the hierarchy of autonomy, originality, alienation, individual genius, and other myths of Romantic and modern art. And it is artists, not architects, who have most nearly approximated the architectural ideal of establishing a flexible framework for social cohesion within the unstable urban world. Art districts like SoHo and the East Village are social magnets for this reason, despite our misgivings about conformity in the art world, our nostalgic laments for the days when artists felt comfortable only in alienation from the crowd.

Of course, the mythologies built up around such ideas as genius and norm, and the opposition between them, are not easily shed. As Norbert Elias observed, the roots of the individual/society antithesis lie "at the foundation of philosophical theories of perception and knowledge." The old Romantic myths remain deeply embedded in today's art world, its economic structure, and the public expectations that support it. What artist is willing to forswear the opportunity of being called a genius? What collector wants to eliminate the chance of having one of them to dinner? Nor are the vast majority of the architects who convened in New York in May poised to abandon their traditional mission to formalize collective social values; to do so would be to break the social contract from which their authority as a profession still derives. The public is not clamoring for architects to fill up cities with

monuments to their idiosyncratic visions, and Prince Charles is hardly the only outspoken advocate for community design. Artists and architects who do question the validity of these ideologies thus find themselves staring at each other from opposite sides of a cultural impasse, mutually dependent on the wall that divides them even as they attempt to undermine its foundations.

TEN YEARS or so ago, the appeal of public art was that it seemed to offer a way out of this impasse. The way led to a fallow field, but not a new one; the boosterish rhetoric that has come to surround public art is similar in tone to that which launched the City Beautiful Movement a century ago. Then, as now, collaborations between architects, sculptors, and landscape designers were hailed as evidence of an American Renaissance, symbols of urban America's cultural coming of age. Beyond the similarity of rhetoric, however, there is a fundamental difference between the two movements. City Beautiful artists viewed the public as a uniform mass with a common cultural heritage and shared civic values. Public artists today tend to operate with little clear sense of what "the public" is or what its values are, and with even less confidence in their right to prescribe what those values ought to be.

The key, problematic word in public art is not "art" but "public." Just as 20th-century art has frequently addressed the question, What is art?, so public art has asked, What is the public? What is a public at a time when we are uncomfortably conscious of the differences that divide us into subcultures? When we have grown to mistrust those forces (media homogenization, psychotherapeutic authority, consumer marketing, including the marketing of art and culture) that would flatten the differences into a spurious unity or, worse, a genuine unity? It is through questions, rather than through aesthetic ideas, that public art has most deeply engaged us.

Sometimes the engagement is deliberate. In *Running Fence* by Christo (who pioneered in this field), the function of the physical art object—a nylon ribbon looping over the hills of Northern California—was to disclose the social process involved in its making. How do you raise money to construct a project on the scale of public works with no apparent social utility? How do you get permission to build it? How do you turn community resistance into public support?

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Maya Lin's Vietnam Veterans' Memorial commemorates two tragedies, one of fate, one of folly: the loss of those killed in the war, and the enlargement of that loss by the government's determination to foist a spurious national unity ("American will") on a divided nation and a changing world. Lin's abstract form declines to turn the public into an abstraction. The dead are represented by their own names. The public is represented as itself, reflected in the black granite: veterans, war resisters, relatives, tourists, whoever shows up on a given day to pay witness.

Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc*, placed in the

courtyard of Federal Plaza in lower Manhattan, prompted the office workers who daily trudged through the plaza to petition for the sculpture's removal. Hearings held to debate the issue in 1985 amounted to a bankruptcy proceeding against the antithesis between individual and society on which the artist based his case. Serra presented himself as a virtual Noble Savage, complete with blue collar background, as if this somehow certified his authority to represent "the people." What many of the (mostly white collar) workers resented was not Serra's aesthetics, but his manipulative social psychology: provoking "the public" into re-

jecting him, then losing his temper when it did so.

Yet it is possible to be grateful to Serra for providing relief from the bland, predictable pieties of the growing public art industry. There is now a well-entrenched network of artists who work exclusively in this field, good government types who champion it, and art critics at considerable pains to distinguish public art from public relations. As the same familiar faces turn up repeatedly at conferences on public art and juries that award commissions, it is easy to arrive at the opinion that this field has been drastically overcultivated and

should be returned to its fallow state for at least another century.

BUT ONE project worth watching in the months ahead is notable because its four collaborators do not carry the customary public art credentials, though they are gifted luminaries in their own fields: Henry Smith-Miller and Laurie Hawkinson (architects), Barbara Kruger (artist), and Nicholas Quinnell (landscape architect). Last January this team entered a national competition to create a new park on 164 acres of rolling, partly wooded landscape on the outskirts of Raleigh, North Carolina. Their winning entry, entitled "Imperfect Utopia," was singled out because it promised to introduce critical thinking in place of the usual platitudes.

As it happens, the site in its present state offers a field day for post-structuralist excavations. One side is bordered by a suburban housing development of the 1960s, the proverbial little houses made of tickytacky whose mass production flattened Frank Lloyd Wright's subur-

7 TYPES OF CONGRUITY

1

In a bi-plane over Anchorage,
the white snow roaring
in its quiet knowledge
like the roar
of plankton, the roar of the giraffe
in the half-chewed trees,
the roar of the mouse-tail
in the mouth of the python,
the sizzling roar between
filaments in a bulb;
the roar of the sea, not
in a shell but in a styrofoam cup,
among people, surrounded by people;
the white snow roaring
like her skin.

2

Teika asks *What need
is there for cherry flowers
or crimson leaves?*

What need can there be
but desire?

3

Her hair is neither
like straw nor flax. It is not
like tinsel, nor the wire tendril
of a plastic plant.

It is not like the rain, nor
a twist of light by Vermeer.

4

*... as a bay grows fishermen
Or hills a shepherd ...*

so the body grows its heart.

5

I learned about her knee today,
its stingy way of bending so, right
at the bone, where least expected.
Never have I known the rules of thumb
and elbow as comment on the future,
the possibility of what's beyond
a bend: in the shepherd's crook
or the hinge of black *tsunami*,
like butter folded into dough.
I learned about her knee today,
the very angle of her laugh.

6

small talk
trumpet and snare
a parade in the wrist, streamers
her tired hands thin
blue as dusk
and the blood's steady tuba

7

The moon pleads with the parking meter,
the postman's shoes with the basement
window,
the newspaper with the fish it wraps.

On a corner, in a stairwell, look
no one's watching, please.

*Crimson leaves, Teika,
her body is crimson leaves
in a wind-swirl of lies.*

ALAN MICHAEL PARKER

ban dream into a caricature of individual sovereignty. On the other side is a prison, or as we now say, a correctional facility, an architectural machine for processing individuals who have failed to curtail their sovereignty within socially approved boundaries. Horses graze on the site, but as wards of the nearby state agricultural school these poignant reminders of arcadia are as much a part of industrial life as the cars speeding down the highway that abuts their pasture. And at the center of this suburban vista squats the North Carolina Museum of Art, a Modern clunk designed in 1976 by the office of Edward Durrell Stone.

WITH ITS blank, fortresslike walls, its green *cordon sanitaire* of clipped golf course grass, the museum building embodies the idea of art as something isolated, set apart from its surroundings and from the history that produced it. This conception—the idea that Civilization must be protected from civilization—is not shared by the museum's present administration. They have commissioned the new park to reconfigure physically and conceptually the museum's relationship to its urbanized context. "Imperfect Utopia" is public art about a public art museum. It asks, What is the place of an art institution at a time when the walls between high and low art have become, at most, a set of movable partitions? How can such an institution physically embody the rapid shifts of context in which we are now willing to recognize art's pleasant and unpleasant eruptions: a carving on a rock, a saxophonist on the subway platform, an environmental artist moving tons of earth around in a remote corner of the desert?

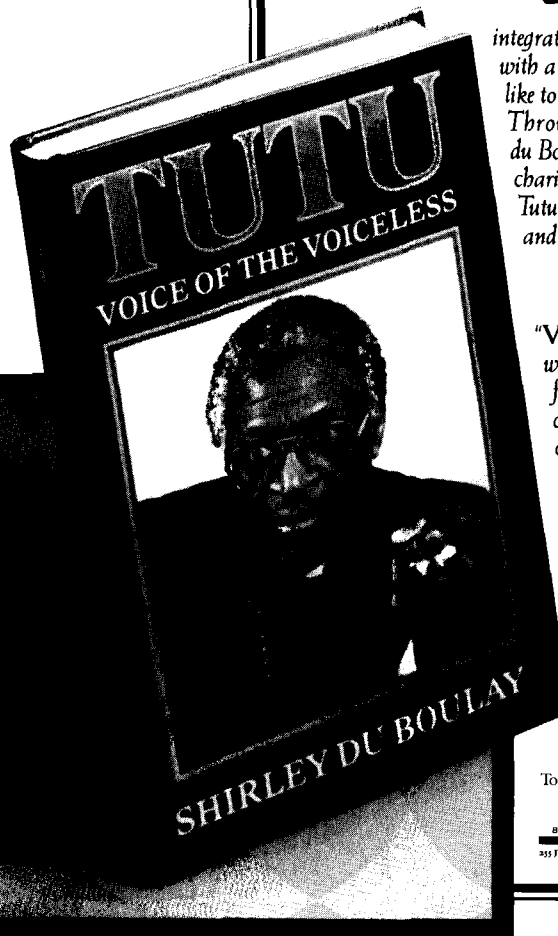
What the design team is proposing in response to these questions is closer in concept to a set of city zoning ordinances than a traditional architect's master plan. Instead of envisioning permanent structures, what the team calls "The Document" will set forth guidelines for programming the site for a variety of changing cultural and horticultural uses. Visual artists, performers, architects, curators, and others who want to use the site will occupy the role of "developers"; the museum administration, guided by The Document, will function as a kind of planning board.

This is not the sort of park that preservationists will feel obliged to protect from the onslaughts of crass concessionaries. Landscaping and signs (designed

by Kruger) are being developed not, in the Olmsted manner, to simulate a primordial landscape that culture has spoiled, but to show, through a geography of the site's past and present uses (agricultural, scientific, economic, aesthetic), that nature, too, has a social history. The title "Imperfect Utopia" alludes to the experience of the 16th-century English explorers of this territory who soon discovered the difference between idealized European views of the New Virginia and the harsh realities of taking up residence in that "natural paradise" (including the reality of being decimated by members of the culture whose home it already was). Cars will park in a grove of trees; the horses will not be banned.

This may well be the sort of project that offends those still hoping to preserve the sanctity of the museum from outside onslaughts. It is an open question whether the new post-structuralist dispensation will produce something worth replacing the old borders between nature, culture, art, and life. As far as the designers of this project are concerned, the question should remain open indefinitely: "to have no end in sight" is one of the objectives set forth in their proposal. Even so, it is possible to see that somewhere down the line the park could turn into an aesthetic Hooverville, with busloads of craftspeople covering the lawns with handmade belts and "You Gotta Have Art" T-shirts. It's one thing when Kruger violates the pseudo-sanctity of

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the commercial art gallery with slogans like "I shop therefore I am" that call attention to art's traffic with commerce. But does the museum stand to benefit from a similar critique? What museum doesn't already boast one or more gift shops and a flock of peddlers and street performers gathered about the gates? I

think we're justified in asking whether it's a gain to know that a festival atmosphere has been programmed by planners acquainted with Foucault and Baudrillard—though I also think that the museum has shown vision in inviting this quartet to sprout a few ideas on the instability of art's position in a built-up world.

Hitler. He tried to find arguments in favor of *all* the dictators.

We look for three rewards from the letters of a public figure: a fuller picture of the man, including his friends and the nature of the relationships; a sharpened feeling for the time in which he lived; and lastly, some illumination of his work, particularly of his intentions in it. Shaw's letters so richly satisfy all these expectations that the puzzle of his attitude toward the dictators, when he was otherwise so acutely humane a private man, is only deepened.

In 1927 he said that the Italians he had met held no brief for Mussolini, "but they enjoyed the punctuality of the trains," etc; that in trampling on civil rights Mussolini was only "doing in Italy what we have never hesitated to do in England and Ireland"; and that the Italians sustained him in power because "they are so tired of indiscipline and muddle and parliamentary deadlock"—by far his strongest point. Much of this was the conventional *conservative* opinion in Europe, and Shaw was clearly troubled by the outrage his socialist colleagues understandably expressed at his views, because extended letters to them continued for several months.

The first real test had come in May 1924, when Giacomo Matteotti, the secretary-general of the Italian Socialist Party, was murdered by the Fascists 12 days after he had denounced the Fascist Party. The atrocity caused an international uproar (ten years later Europe would be numb to a single atrocity); it was the clearest signal that Mussolini was bent on destroying democracy, and the European socialists had found their first martyr to the dictators. But Shaw wouldn't join in. While condemning this "and other revolting incidents of the Fascist terror," he was skeptical of the socialists' use of martyrs, and consistently argued that there was a limit to his or anyone else's right to lecture other countries about the flaws in their political systems. It was a defensible position (in 1927 he refused, correctly, to join in the left's outrage at the imminent execution of Sacco and Vanzetti), and Shaw's independence from his socialist colleagues was admirable. Yet they were right in sensing that the Matteotti assassination heralded a return of barbarism to civilized Europe.

Shaw's attitude to Mussolini, whom he unwisely dismissed as "the Big Simpleton," becomes insufferable in his justification of the Italian campaign in Ab-

THE DEVIL AND GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Collected Letters, 1926-1950

by Bernard Shaw

edited by Dan H. Laurence

(Viking, 946 pp., \$45)

It is daunting to talk of the time in which Bernard Shaw lived, since it stretched from the last year of the Crimean War to the first year of the Korean War: from Palmerston to Truman, from the Charge of the Light Brigade to Douglas MacArthur on the Yalu! Moreover, during most of these 94 years he could hardly have been more articulate on the major and many minor issues of the day. One can understand Mrs. Patrick Campbell's writing to him in 1912: "Oh dear me—its [sic] too late to do anything but *accept* you and *love* you—but when you were quite a little boy somebody ought to have said 'hush' to you just once." But anyone who reads this fourth and final volume of his letters must be glad that the hush did not come until he said, "I am going to die," and fell into his last coma.

Shaw's energy to the end was hardly restrained. In 1944, when he was 88, he published a substantial new prose work, *Everybody's Political What's What*, which was meant to explain what the leaders and voters in a democracy needed to know. It instantly sold 85,000 copies, and another 50,000 by the end of the year. I remember queuing with other undergraduates to buy it at Blackwell's on publication day. The army, although Shaw was a socialist, bought 4,000 copies to distribute to the troops. At the same time Shaw gave permission to the army to publish an edition of *Selected Plays* for the servicemen, with no reimbursement to him.

In 1945 Shaw was at work on a new play, *Buoyant Billions*, which had its premiere in London in 1949. Simultaneously he added a fourth act to *Geneva* for the

printed edition, and eight days after the atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, wrote to a friend that his preface to it "has been knocked to pieces . . . and must be rewritten." He was also preparing the Oxford World's Classics edition of *Back to Methuselah*, with preface and text extensively revised, and was seeing the screen version of *Major Barbara* through the press. Between 1944 and his death in 1950, he contributed 400 articles, messages, letters, and self-drafted interviews to newspapers and journals, while keeping up a correspondence of several thousand letters and postcards a year.

These late letters, beginning just before his 70th birthday, still "enlarge all the dimensions of the man," as Stanley Kauffmann wrote in these pages of the second volume. But unlike the earlier volumes, the fourth has one overriding interest for us. The letters begin four years after Mussolini ordered the March on Rome. They end three years before the death of Stalin. We are therefore brought face to face, in a most personal manner, with Shaw's dismaying efforts to vindicate the dictators.

Shaw cannot be excused by saying that he was only playing the mountebank. On the eve of his 90th birthday he wrote to an American friend, "You must never think of me as speaking or writing with my tongue in my cheek. . . . Though I may clown a bit occasionally for fun. . . . But I abhor insincerity, and believe what I preach." The interest of Shaw's position is that he was not a Communist who denounced Hitler but applauded Stalin, nor a conservative who denounced Stalin but applauded

ysinia, of which he wrote to a French friend in 1936:

... in the conflict between Danakil savage and civilized Italian you must, as a civilized man, be on the Italian side. ...

... in the face of the scalp hunting North American Indian, the head hunting Dyak, the cannibal Maori, and the testicle hunting Danakil, European civilization must stand solid.

And yet this was the same man who had twice, during his visit to New Zealand in 1934, expressed in letters home his concern over the fate of Maori music under European domination; and whose *The Adventures of a Black Girl in Her Search for God* was a fable critical of the efforts to impose European Christianity on a native people. These more natural sympathies were set aside, however, in favor of the accomplished fact of Italian might in Abyssinia, and of his own very Eurocentric elitist conviction in the superiority of Western civilization. Shaw's last significant word on Mussolini came at the time of the Munich agreement: "Musso let me down completely by going anti-Semite on me."

Among Shaw's far more objectionable efforts to vindicate Hitler, there was at least this redeeming grace: that he was one of the very earliest Britons or Americans to denounce the Nazis' treatment of the Jews. His views were so well known that even in 1933 a performance of *Too True to Be Good* in Mannheim was interrupted by Nazi shouts of "Jew Shaw!" At the same time he wrote to his Austrian agent, Siegfried Trebitsch, of a "wholesale catastrophe." Extremely few people in 1933, long before the Holocaust, saw the "magnitude of the catastrophe" that was building, and Shaw never compromised in his belief that the Nazis' anti-Semitism was "a very malignant disease." But that makes it only more bewildering that he went to such lengths to argue that "logically [anti-Semitism] has nothing to do with

Fascism," Nazism, or even Hitlerism, even though in the same letter he concluded: "But ... as Fascism spreads anti-Semitism spreads." He saw it, yet he ignored it. Why?

In March 1940, as Hitler was launching his Blitzkrieg, Shaw wrote to the pro-German German-American G. S. Viereck, "I think I made Hitler give a better account of himself than he has ever done in real life." Here Shaw was referring specifically to his depiction of Hitler

had "lifted Germany from the gutter into which the Allies kicked her," he was only expressing the view of conservatives, liberals, and socialists at the time. But only a few exceptional men such as Churchill could condemn the Versailles peace terms and still say that Hitler's unilateral correction of them was an invitation to a greater disaster.

What is incomprehensible is the argument Shaw used to explain (if not explain away) the horrors of the concentration camps when these were first revealed after the liberation of Germany. Of what value was his early warning of the "magnitude of the catastrophe" when in September 1945 he could write to C. H. Norman of the actual horrors:

Belsen was obviously produced by the incompetence and breakdown of the military command. The concentration camps are always left to the refuse of officers' messes, for whom the job of feeding and sanitating the prisoners is too much. The result is always the same more or less.

Now, I saw the newsreels of Bergen-Belsen when they were first shown, slotted in between the Disney shorts and travelogues in the newsreel cinemas. There was no way calmly to explain what one saw in terms of incompetence (what incompetence?) and breakdown of command (what breakdown?).

In the same way, Shaw had turned aside from the incontrovertible reports of Stalin's purges and trials when they began in 1936, writing to Beatrice Webb: "This Russian business is very puzzling. It looks like a Popish Plot without any Titus Oates, or another witch burning epidemic. ... I suppose we must wait until we get some authentic news." Yet even as more news emerged, he paid little attention. Shaw lived for the rest of his life off his single meeting with Stalin. It took place during his triumphal visit to the Soviet Union in 1931, on the occasion of his 75th birthday, when he was



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

(Battler) in his play *Geneva*, but it was true also of all his efforts until the outbreak of war to put the most favorable interpretation on Hitler's domestic policies—efforts that essentially echoed his excuses for Mussolini. He was an appeaser, in short. Among his reasons for giving Hitler and his Germany as much benefit of the doubt as possible was one less damning than the rest. A strong case was then (and still can be) made for saying that the seeds of the Second World War were sown in the Carthaginian peace the Allies imposed on Germany in 1919. When Shaw said to Viereck that Hitler

1. I hold, with Adolf Hitler, that our political democracy is a lie. Its "waning" means presumably its being found out. The faster it "wanes" ^{in this sense} the better I shall be pleased.

2. There is no antithesis between authoritarian government and democracy. All government is authoritarian; and the more democratic a government is the more authoritative it is; for with the people behind it it can push its authority farther than any Isar or foreign despot dare do.

AN EXCERPT FROM A LETTER TO THE NEW REPUBLIC FROM GEORGE BERNARD SHAW, 1936

greeted by banners of "Hail Shaw!" (His vanity did not always meet resistance from his self-deprecation.) In 1938 he wrote to the wife of the dean of St. Paul's: "Stalin, with his Georgian eyes and frank smile, is the lady killer as far as looks go; but he is said to be a model of domesticity, virtue, and innocence." In 1941 he told H. G. Wells: "[Stalin] was very friendly; and as I was treated all through as if I were Karl Marx risen from the grave, I did not see the rough side of anybody or anything. But there was no attempt to humbug me." The speech he delivered in Moscow was a disgrace: "Now upon my return [to Britain] I can say: Yes, I have seen all the 'terrors,' and I was terribly pleased by them."

These staggering remarks place Shaw in the worst possible position, from which he cannot be retrieved. But we can also see how he had placed himself there. His infatuation with Stalin, which was shared even by some conservatives between the wars, was not used by him to justify communism. On the contrary, in order to exalt Stalin's achievements, he had to claim, again and again in his letters, that Stalin was truly a Fabian, committed to gradualism, and not to revolution, as the path to a socialist society. Stalin really stands in Shaw's eyes as a Great Victorian—the last generation of statesmen that Shaw, born in 1856, honored—a benign, paternalistic disciplinarian of his people.

But as a dramatist, Shaw put no faith in "systems." These letters are full of wonderfully pointed denunciations of the political or even intellectual systems

to which his friends and others were attracted. "If you pick up the jargon of pseudo-Communism," he wrote in 1934 to a friend, Christina Walshe, who by then espoused communism, "you will become a BORE, and be avoided by all your friends like the plague, besides getting committed to Class War . . . and all the other exploded blunders of XIX century pre-Fabian revolutionism." It would be entirely false, then, to call Shaw a fellow traveler. He claimed, almost provocatively, to be a "Communist," but his was an idiosyncratic, muddled, and irretrievably "English" communism. ("Communism in Britain must be as British as the Fabian Society.") It had only a tenuous connection with anything advocated by "your 'Communist Party' as it calls itself," a typical exclamation of scorn. And Shaw was clearer than most Communists or Socialists in saying, at the height of the Depression, "I see no reason to believe that the crisis is the Marxian crash that is to end in world revolution." His socialism owed far more to William Morris, whose *News from Nowhere* appeared when he was in his early 30s, than to the Marxism to which he said he had been "a Victorian convert."

But if Shaw denied the capacity of systems for good, he was also blind to their capacity for evil. Uninterested in the real nature of Fascism, Nazism, or communism, he was left with Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin; and they were accomplished facts. They headed the dramatic personae; they had to be fit into the plot. Without them, there would be no play. And yet Shaw proved a very bad critic of

the drama he watched unfold.

Shaw's life more or less spanned the rise and fall of socialism as an intellectual and political force in Europe. His letters, given the independence of his position and his acquaintance with many of the socialist leaders and thinkers, throw a highly individual light on the numerous threads of thought and quarrelsome sects that composed the socialist movement. Yet they hardly begin to account for his attitude to the dictators, unless it is in his attraction to the corporate state as a way out of democracy's dilemmas. As he wrote to Lady Rhondda in 1945: "Fascism is nothing but State financed private enterprise. The capitalists have stolen the clothes of the Socialists."

Shaw's disillusion with parliamentary democracy, again a common attitude on both right and left between the wars, lay at the root of his delusion about the dictators. The years from 1919 to 1939 were not the finest hour of the democracies. The Depression was a devastating experience, not least damaging to the self-confidence of the governing classes, who were thus ready to submit to upstarts like Mussolini and Hitler, because they could "get things done." At least they seemed to understand the masses, to know how to manipulate the impulses of mass society. That was Shaw's point in a letter to Friedrich Adler, the distinguished Austrian Socialist leader who was living in exile in Switzerland, in which he argued "that government is not the natural monopoly of the bourgeoisie and aristocracy is very conclusively proved by Mus-

solini himself who is a man of the people, and *knows them*." To Adler's faith in achieving socialism by parliamentary democracy, Shaw wrote, "Oh Friedrich, Friedrich!!!"

The democracies were just as feckless and incapable in their foreign policies. When the time came to resist the march of the dictators, Shaw believed, with many others, that they had neither the will nor the competence to resist. So why not cave in? In 1927 he said of Mussolini: "... we had our chance of challenging him over Corfu [in 1923]; and when we funk'd that we practically admitted that we must put up with him." When war eventually came, he wrote to Beatrice Webb: "There is a point at which continuous successes will make a man believe that he can achieve anything. As I read it, this point was reached when we let Hitler get away with Czechoslovakia"—all of which was tenable, except the conclusion.

SHAW BELIEVED strongly in equality, but then made the calamitous error of elevating equality over liberty as a good. On this he was alarmingly frank. "Now we, as Socialists, have nothing to do with liberty," he wrote in 1927. "Our message, like Mussolini's, is one of discipline, of service, of ruthless refusal to acknowledge any natural right of competence.... Liberty belongs, not to the day's work..., but the day's leisure...." This was wholly in keeping with his assertion to Trebitsch immediately after Hitler came to power: "... I have been the first to applaud Hitler's two great steps as to compulsory labor and the trade unions," and with his support of the collectivization of agriculture in Russia, in spite of the known inhumanity that attended it.

The elitism that is paradoxically reflected in this ruthless insistence on equality is strong. The freedom of German trade unionists and the lives of Russian peasants are of slight concern, although in his personal life Shaw preached equality and often came to the assistance of the underdog. Especially as he got older, he reminded his correspondents that he was a Victorian. In the 19th century, before anything approaching universal suffrage was achieved in Britain, parliamentary democracy was an ideal system, he wrote to Winston Churchill after the war. (Shaw was already 72 when it was finally extended to women.) In the same

letter he praised the "Tory Democracy" of Disraeli, of Churchill's father, and finally of Churchill himself. "I do not suggest that you should revive the cry of Tory Democracy," Shaw wrote. "But what about Democratic Aristocracy?" The Fabians themselves were firmly elitist, believing that the workers would be best governed not by themselves, but by an intelligent elect of men and women such as the Fabians. Shaw, said Chesterton, was "a splendid republican.... The interest of the State is with him a sincere thirst of the soul." As democracy developed into universal suffrage, it lost for Shaw the character of a state: "It is a mob."

The conventional Victorian, which in many ways Shaw was, could only come to his senses as war approached. With the outbreak of war, his natural patriotism (for England, not Ireland) took over. After the fall of France, when Britain "stood alone," Shaw wrote to a friend, "It is all right now we are thoroughly frightened. England never does anything until that happens; but, when it does, then Lord help her enemies!" By June 1940, in a letter to Beatrice Webb, he stood much of his previous nonsense on its head in one brief sentence: "We must not let Adolf give Socialism a bad name."

During the war Shaw even displayed some moderately far-reaching strategic sense. As early as April 1940, he wrote: "... but what about America?... Neither they nor the U.S.S.R. may be able to keep out of it this time either." Probably in June 1940, after France fell, he wrote a bold suggestion to Churchill:

Dear Prime Minister

Why not declare war on France and capture her fleet (which would gladly strike its colors to us) before A.H. recovers his breath?

Surely that is the logic to the situation?

tactically,

G. Bernard Shaw

Churchill did not declare war on Vichy France, but he did send the Royal Navy into Oran to sink the pride of the French Fleet where it was hiding, rather than let it fall into the hands of the Germans.

In light of the fact that in 1945 Shaw was nearly 90, his wartime letters are remarkably and refreshingly to the point. At least his admiration for Stalin kept him clear of the anti-Communists' belief (and hope) that Russia would crumble before Hitler's onslaught. He saw,



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as Churchill sensed, that Stalin's will would prevent the Soviet Union from disintegrating. He was quick to recognize that one of Hitler's great mistakes in the war was "in not making the occupied countries the better for his coming, as Julius Caesar managed to do in Spain." In this Hitler was "a Terrorist and a tough," and his "smattering of cheap science . . . filled his head with a crude notion of 'the survival of the fittest.'" Suddenly, and belatedly, Shaw recognized the evils that were inherent in Hitlerism and Nazism.

Shaw was correct, moreover, in observing that "the air war . . . is reducing war to absurdity," and in condemning the Allied bombing in 1944-45:

Our warfare strikes friend and foe alike; and instead of gaining rich cities and subjugating industrious populations we reduce the cities to heaps of rubble, and leave those of their inhabitants whom we do not kill without the means of practising their industries. The fact that this horror has been forced on us by circumstances may excuse us; but it does not lessen the terror of it . . .

The only remedy would be "a conspicuous humanity in all our dealings with the victims and the vanquished" after the war. He might have been anticipating the Marshall Plan when he said: "This time we must feed the children at all costs. Every meal they eat at our table will be a premium of the very safest form of insurance against another war." In much the same spirit he asked Nancy Astor: "Tell Winston to stop talking alarming nonsense about unconditional surrender."

SHAW'S ATTITUDE to the dictators dominates our interest in this volume more than it dominates the letters themselves, or indeed his life and work. The approximately 350 recipients testify to the wide range not only of Shaw's friends and acquaintances, but also of his interests—from his zeal for aviation (balloons, biplanes, rocketry, and space travel) to his involvement in the emergence of motion pictures. And of course the volume provides an unparalleled commentary by a master dramatist on the technique of drama, the history of the theater during his own time, and the business of the playwright and the writer in general.

But above all the letters are a testimony to the array of Shaw's friends, and to the qualities in the man that kept them ever loyal. (His unusual ability to like

people in spite of their faults, and even while pointing them out in these letters, was misplaced when transferred to the tyrants.) Oscar Wilde said (more than once), "Mr. Bernard Shaw has no enemies but is intensely disliked by all his friends." The first half is true. The main evidence is supplied not by any individual letter, but by the absence of enemies in a life that was one of ceaseless and public controversy. Ivo Geikie-Cobb, who as a representative of the BBC Overseas Services during the war had dealings with Shaw, was only speaking the all but universal judgment when he wrote in his journal in 1940: "No one who knows [Shaw] and appreciates the humanity which prompts his actions can do otherwise than admire him. . . . Shaw, the man, is completely and irresistibly lovable." As for the second half of Wilde's quip, if he meant it, it was wide of the mark.

THE READER who did not know of Shaw's generosity before will be astounded by the repeated evidence of it in this volume. In 1934 he sensed that Beatrice Webb's illness and the state of the market during the Depression had put a severe strain on the Webbs' finances. So Shaw instructed his banker to pay the then munificent sum of £1,000 into Sidney Webb's account. When Webb was informed of the credit by his bank, and wrote to Shaw, "... words fail me," Shaw made light of it, saying the gift was meant to be therapeutic: "Nobody can resist the bucking effect of a thousand pounds in a lump."

Though not close to his family, he supported two aunts and provided for the education of at least two children of relatives. The help to others, always very privately extended, was unceasing. When someone did repay a loan, often several years later, Shaw never cashed the check. "Paying a forgotten debt," he told the wood engraver John Farleigh, "is honest but thriftless." What counted was not only the sums of money, but the lack of condescension, and the deflection of guilt or gratitude in the recipient.

But one body of letters is particularly moving. They were addressed to Dame Laurentia McLachlan, the prioress and then abbess of Stanbrook Abbey. The correspondence between this spirited nun of simple devoutness and the incorrigible atheist would itself serve as the basis for a play. In 1934 he mistook a souvenir card celebrating her golden ju-

bilee as a nun for a memorial card announcing her death, and he wrote a touching letter of condolence to the nuns of her order. On discovering his error, he wrote to her: "Laurentia! Alive!!! Well!!!! Is this a way to trifle with a man's most sacred feelings? . . . Oh, Laurentia, Laurentia, how *could* you. I weep tears of blood. Poor Brother Bernard." Sister McLachlan gave as good as she got in answer to his protests against her religion—Shaw genuinely thought the Crucifixion was a masochistic event, since the Son of God could have saved himself—and the affection, admiration, and enjoyment between them was mutual. The letters are crucial to understanding Shaw's attitude toward religion. He envied the abbess her simple faith. She (who prayed for him; he asked for her prayers) had cottoned on to what Yeats once observed in a letter to George Russell in 1921: "I agree about Shaw—he is haunted by the mystery he flouts. He is an atheist who trembles in the haunted corridor."

THE HUMANITY and the sensitivity of Shaw run through these letters, and they extend, as one would expect, to his attitudes on the "social questions" of the day. Throughout his life he was a supporter of the suffragettes and of a wider feminism. In 1940, on the 12th anniversary of Ellen Terry's death, her daughter asked him for a message to be read at a commemorative ceremony. At the age of 84 he sent a letter of well over 2,000 words placing Ellen Terry in her context in the revival of the theater in which he (after Ibsen) played so large a part; and he referred to "an aphorism of mine [it was one of his 'Maxims for a Revolutionist'] which ran 'Home, sweet home, is the girl's prison and the woman's workhouse.'" It was no accident that many of his closest friends (and correspondents) were among the most intelligent and feistiest women of the time. One of the striking facts about Shaw was that he was always aware, as all sensible men should be, of the bold femininity in his nature. He spoke difficult common sense on the subject of abortion.

The reach of his humanity emerges especially strongly in a letter to his great friend Nancy Astor, after he had learned that one of the Astors' sons had been arrested and imprisoned for homosexuality. We must remember that at the time—1932—not only homosexuals, but the whole subject of homosexuality, were kept in the closet. There had been

nothing in Nancy Astor's upbringing or environment to prepare her for such a jolt. Shaw's letter runs to two of the large pages of this volume:

I find myself troubled from time to time when I think of the case of our friend who got into difficulties. . . . I wonder has he ever studied his own case scientifically and objectively. A man may suffer acutely and lose his self-respect very dangerously if he mistakes for a frightful delinquency on his part a condition for which he is no more morally responsible than for color blindness. Also, his relatives may suffer just as cruelly . . .

When I was young and ignorant I had the usual thoughtless horror of it; . . . in fact I never thought of such a thing and did not want to hear about it. . . .

There follows a long explanation of how he overcame his prejudice, and the letter concludes with some wise but not facile counsel for Astor and her son: "the first need is for free healthy discussion. . . . Now what you tell me about our friend makes me suspect that he has not reached that point and is still struggling with mischievous and tormenting shames and reticences. . . ."

What finally emerges from these letters is the fundamentally conventional (if radical) Victorian figure who survived through the first half of a very different

century. In his work Shaw played a vital role in demolishing old pruderies, as in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, but his intelligent contemporaries recognized that in his life he remained a Victorian puritan. (He was already 45 when Victoria died.) He was a gentleman, very much a gentleman, of European civilization at one of its high points, before the debauch of the 1914-18 war. That war barbarized Europe.

One thing the appeasers between the wars sought to do was preserve the standards and manners of diplomacy of a bygone time. Yes, gentlemen themselves, the democratic statesmen *did* treat Mussolini and Hitler as if they also were gentlemen. Obviously, it was a fault. But it was also, their great blindness notwithstanding, a grace in them, as Hajo Holborn argues in his essential book, *The Political Collapse of Europe*. They did manage to pass on, beyond the dictators, a Western European tradition of civilized international dealing. Shaw was one of them. Between the civilized dealings in his personal life, and his vindication of the dictators as civilized European men, incapable of the atrocities to which he closed his eyes, there was at least one connecting virtue: the assumption that there is decency in everyone.

HENRY FAIRLIE

In this book of 322 pages, only 198 are by Scott. The rest is given to "A Chronology of Caruso's Appearances" by Thomas G. Kaufman and "A Caruso Discography" by Dr. John R. Bolig, both of which emend errors by previous chroniclers. If you think that those two lists will not be read as avidly as Scott's narrative, you don't know opera buffs.

Scott's biography itself is just as long as it needs to be. The first trouble with writing about performers of any kind is that their professional lives, on a day-to-day basis, are not engrossing. Five cities toured here, eleven there. Contracts signed, quarrels started and sometimes smoothed over. Ovations here, banquets there. Every performer's life has its personal colors—Caruso's more than most—but no matter what the colors, the reason for the book's existence is that the artist spent most of his or her life working. The results were or are wonderful; the daily routines that brought about the work are less fascinating. Scott overcomes this first trouble with a keen synoptic sense. He knows when to dwell on detail and when to course along without skimping the transitional data. (Besides, he wants to concentrate on the art of singing. See below.) He spins his story in prose that, excepting a few purple patches, is succinct, lithe, and occasionally witty.

A second trouble with writing about past performers is that, irritatingly, they are dead. No one who has tried such writing can help resenting the subject's inconsiderateness in not being available. This means that, in less or greater measure, biographies of past performers underline Hegel's comment that history is an agreed-upon myth. The biographer must rely on contemporary reviews, along with memoirs, diaries, letters, photographs, and drawings. We need only remember our own opinions of some performers who have had ecstatic reviews in our own day to feel nervous about relying on past reviews. (I remember how shaken I was some years ago when an elderly actress, who had seen Henry Irving several times, said that she had a poor opinion of his acting and gave her reasons.) Then is all history of past performance false? Well, in the subjective world of opinion, what does "false" mean? At any rate, if you or I could see and hear the past performers we have read about, we would argue with some of the biographies.

Scott, obviously, has one great help against the second trouble: Caruso's re-

ON WINGS OF SONG

The Great Caruso by Michael Scott

(Knopf, 322 pp., \$24.95)

When Bernard Shaw published his collected music criticism in 1932, he wrote a brief preface, saying, among other things: "There are people who will read about music and nothing else. To them dead *prima donnas* are more interesting than saints, and extinct tenors than mighty conquerors."

Those people at least, not a negligible number, will want to read this new biography of an extinct tenor who is still astonishingly present. Enrico Caruso (1873-1921) has been dead much longer than he was alive, yet my neighborhood record shop, which has a section of historical vocal recordings arranged A-C, D-F, etc., has a separate section marked Caruso—67 years after his death. To my

knowledge, ten previous books about him have been published in English, the last as recently as 1983. To cite a personal connection, he persists in memory with me, not only through records but because my father, when a student, was a supernumerary in Caruso performances at the Met.

Michael Scott, the author of this new book, is an Englishman who was the founder and artistic director of the London Opera Society, is a lecturer on musical subjects, and has written a two-volume work called *The Record of Singing*. He is quite aware that the title of his Caruso biography was once used for a film, but he insists on reclaiming *The Great Caruso* from MGM for music.

cordings. They do not completely solve the problem—or else Caruso's physical presence in theaters would have been irrelevant—but oh, how they help. Not as much as films do for actors, but they help. The records are especially important for Caruso, not just because he was one of the first important artists to record and was the first huge success on records but because, as Scott shows, Caruso made most of his records during a time of change in opera and singing.

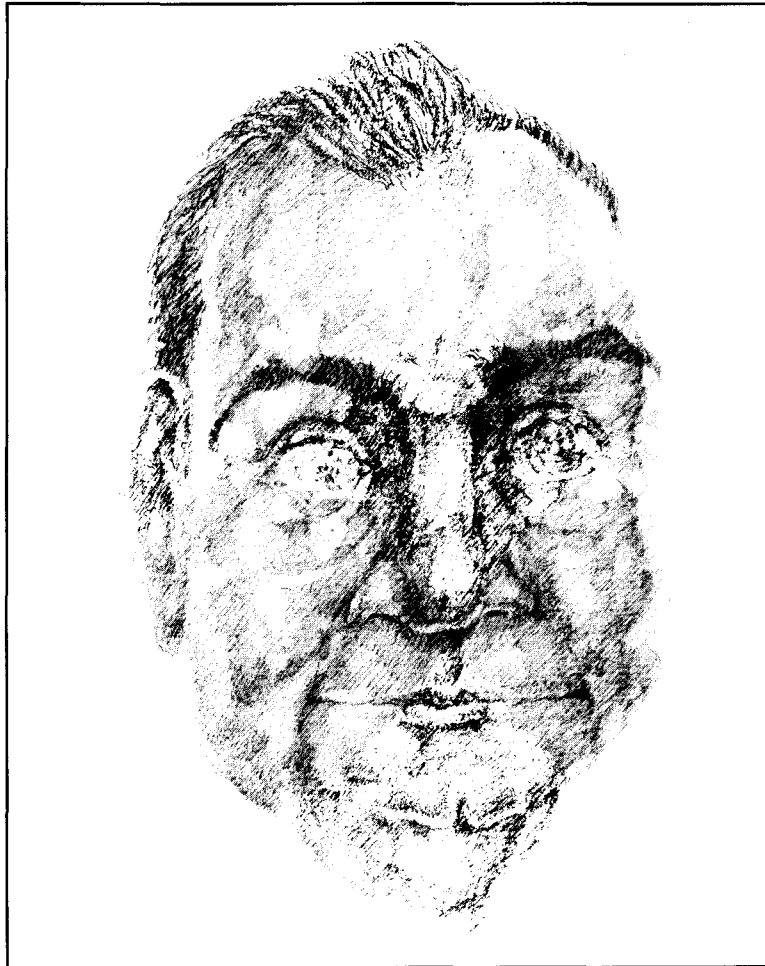
We hear much discussion these days, often mournful, about the disappearance of *bel canto*, but the big changes in singing during Caruso's life did not directly concern *bel canto*. This term—"beautiful singing"—flourished in the 18th and 19th centuries more as an aesthetic directive than a technical description. It enjoins us to concentrate on vocal quality and ornamentation rather than on content. The crucial change, as the 19th century went on, was not a frontal attack on *bel canto* as such, but, says Scott, the cultivation of vibrato by tenors as the orchestra became larger and the score more complex and the voice had to "sound" over the new orchestra. However, as *verismo* (realism) became a greater factor in opera—toward and just after 1900—the use of vibrato seemed increasingly incongruous.

Scott: "Caruso was not the first tenor to abandon it, yet he was the first to achieve a complete success in so doing—as his records were to show."

So one of the chief reasons for Caruso's incredible survival is that his records became the fountainhead of a new approach. Tenors without number, many of them singing today, have modeled their style on his. And those of us who are non-professionals can hear where the qualities we love came from. It's as if those who love Makarova could still have a glimpse of Pavlova.

Caruso's origins and early life were

as "storybook" as his career. He was born to a poor Neapolitan family, his mother's 18th child. (That is not a misprint.) All the previous children had died in infancy. She had three more children, two of whom survived. "By that time," Scott observes calmly, "she was 44 and she never regained her health." When she died, Caruso left the jute mill where his father had got him a job and, having done a bit of singing in churches and amateur shows,



DRAWING BY DAVID SCHORR FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

decided to become a singer.

He had a predictably rough time, singing when he could in churches, festivals, and cafés in and around Naples. He found a teacher of merit who was impressed with him and began his serious vocal education. When he was conscripted for military service, his officers overheard him singing and were so struck with his voice that they said they would release him on condition that he find a replacement. His brother obliged. The story says something about the officers' concern with music and about family feeling.

He lost his first opera assignment through nervousness at the first rehearsal, but he made his opera debut on March 15, 1895, in Naples, in an opera produced by its composer. It was not a success, but Caruso's career prospered. By the end of that summer he was in an Italian company engaged for a season in Egypt. The opportunities that helped him to speed along arose from an underlying cultural fact: during those years there were some 300 opera companies in Italy. This circumstance not only gave employment to singers but encouragement to composers. The appearance of a new opera was not, as it is today, rather like the appearance of a new planet. Much of the Italian repertory that we know today was written during Caruso's career. In time he appeared in 11 world premieres.

He worked and studied, improved his acting, lightened his somewhat dark voice (he was at first thought to have baritone qualities), learned languages. His first foreign language, one could say, was Italian: he had been brought up speaking Neapolitan, sometimes incomprehensible to other Italians. He studied French and eventually became proficient, though he sang French roles in Italian until 1906. Later he learned English. He even composed the music for some English lyrics, "Dreams of Long Ago," which he recorded in 1912.

That recording career had begun on April 11, 1902, in Milan. A pioneer record entrepreneur named Fred Gaisberg fixed up his hotel suite as a recording studio. Caruso, with piano accompaniment, sang ten arias in two hours and started a fire that still burns. He went on to make 488 more recordings, 245 of which are still extant.

His theater career covered a great deal of Europe and both Americas. Since this was before air travel, he must have spent something like an aggregate of two years

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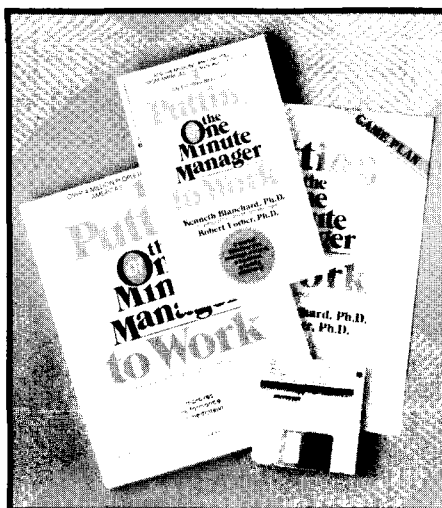
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of his life on ships and trains. At the Metropolitan he sang for 17 years, doing 622 performances of 37 roles. In 1909 he took part in the first experimental radio broadcast from the Met. He made two feature films in New York, which were silent, of course. President Theodore Roosevelt went backstage to greet him when he sang in Washington. When he was in Berlin, Kaiser Wilhelm invited him to a private dinner at Potsdam.

IN CHARACTER he was ebullient, mischievous, vital. He had a liking for practical jokes, even during performances. He had a genuine gift for drawing caricatures, including self-caricatures; a collection of his caricatures was published in 1922. His love life was ample. A long liaison with the soprano Ada Giachetti produced two sons; a subsequent marriage to a much younger American produced a daughter. Those were only the most visible of his alliances.

He was generous. He bought a large villa outside Florence—odd for a Neapolitan to locate so far north—where he sometimes took care of about 20 members of his family. He gave frequent charity concerts, including many benefits for Allied causes during the First World War. (His record of George M. Cohan's "Over There" was a sensation.) Once, on a stop in an American town, he bought the entire contents of a china shop, saying, "If I come to this city and ask people to pay me \$7,000, I have to leave something for the merchants." (If you want to startle yourself, translate \$7,000 into its present-day equivalent.) He died in Naples at 48. The causes of death, according to some medical detective work done years later, were pneumonia, empyema, other abscesses, and peritonitis. He had had plenty of doctors in America and Italy, little help.

But our real concern is his immortality. His recordings are not only, for the most part, beautiful, they are historically monumental. Scott notes that, before Caruso, tenors who sang the same repertory would "have radically differed from one another. But since Caruso's day the phonograph has established his style internationally." He concludes that Caruso

died at exactly the right time for his reputation. It was not until several years later that the introduction of the microphone was to bring in its wake a whole bevy of popular singers, or crooners, whose voices did not any longer need the breath support necessary to project across the spaces of a theater or concert auditorium.

Scott of course doesn't contend that opera houses or serious concert halls now use microphones: he is talking about states of mind and technique and the state of the audience's ear.

I take "at the right time" to mean that Caruso was trained and grew in a music world in which recording was secondary and the microphone unfamiliar. Yet he is preserved to us by recording. He personifies a school of wholly theater-oriented voice production saved for us, paradoxically, by the very technology that has made such orientation rare.

Thus Caruso continues to enlighten

us, singers and listeners alike. One of the best-known Caruso stories—aptly melodramatic—is of his first meeting with Puccini. In 1897 Caruso was booked to sing Rodolfo in *La Bohème* at a Leghorn theater, and knowing that Puccini lived nearby, he went to the villa, to get the composer's imprimatur on his interpretation. The young tenor had sung only a few measures when Puccini burst out, "Who sent you? God?" How many singers, how many listeners, have thought more or less the same thing since then?

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

TROUBLE IN PARADISE

Adam, Eve, and the Serpent by Elaine Pagels

(Random House, 189 pp., \$17.95)

Although Elaine Pagels's new book treats what is perhaps the best known story in the Bible, her discussion is considerably less accessible and straightforward than the narrative it deals with, the Fall in Genesis. In five of her six chapters, the analysis is so qualified and understated that it is difficult to distill into direct statements. Pagels herself seems at least partly aware of the problem: at the end of the book she mentions that a colleague, having heard her talk about her topic, responded, "What are you saying?" It is easy to sympathize with him.

Pagels seems to be saying that during the first few centuries of Christian thought, theological interpretations of Genesis were generally optimistic. Learned Christian opinion emphasized the innocence and the autonomy of Adam and Eve before the Fall as signs of the freedom, the independence, the goodness belonging to humans in a state of grace; and they proceeded to attribute these same happy qualities to the members of their own nascent Christian community. The pagan world around them, by contrast, was fallen. By the time of Augustine (late fourth/early fifth century), of course, the Roman world had become largely Christian. Still, it was hardly Eden: the Christian empire and the Church itself were racked with strife, riddled with corruption, and as prey to human ills as the pagan world had been. When Augustine offered a much more

pessimistic reading of Genesis—a reading in which (according to Pagels) no human beings were good, or could be good, without the intervention of God's grace, and of coercive government, ecclesiastical and secular—it proved closer to the experience of most Christians than the earlier optimism. And this cynical cosmology quickly and permanently displaced its rivals.

Pagels's analysis is not entirely new (she cites the work of other scholars in the notes), but it is deftly expressed. It is no easy job to lead modern readers on a tour of the vast doctrinal controversies of the first five centuries of the Christian era. Pagels's ability to do so is especially impressive when combined, as in her last chapter, with penetrating wisdom about human responses to suffering and their relation to high-culture theology. She is an able guide to what basic human needs and sorrows are met or assuaged by intellectual speculations and official religious teaching about the meaning of evil and the value of pain.

Yet after she herself has pointed out all of the major pitfalls of scholarship in these treacherous areas, Pagels promptly, disappointingly, maddeningly plunges into each one of them, leaving the reader tottering on the edge in amazement and wondering what has become of her. Thus she notes, entirely correctly, that neither mainstream Christianity nor "heretical" movements (that is, groups

of Christians whose opinions would ultimately not become the orthodox doctrine of the Church) were homogeneous or univocal during the first half millennium of the Christian era. But then she treats both as if they were coherent, airtight systems. She adduces writings by theologians like Clement of Alexandria or John Chrysostom, for example, as representative of Christian thought at a given time, stating or implying in the structure of her argument that we can infer from them what the rest of the "orthodox" Christians were thinking. In fact, such writers—mostly well-educated, ascetic prelates, leading lives quite different from the majority of Christians—were frequently expostulating *against* the beliefs or opinions of their Christian contemporaries.

CELIBACY, Pagels contends, offered Christians a means of regaining the "lost paradise of virginity," and contributed to their optimism and feelings of superiority over the fallen pagans. To make this case, she not only treats the views of ascetics as characteristic of early Christianity (which is probably misleading), but maintains that "the majority of Christians married but continued nonetheless to assert the primacy of renunciation." One wonders, to begin with, how she knows what "the majority of Christians" asserted. After all, they left no record. Moreover, what evidence there is about their opinions in the writings of the ascetic minority (evidence that Pagels herself cites elsewhere in her book) actually suggests the opposite. She quotes Jerome, an advocate of celibacy, complaining that

frequently, when priests are ordained, a virgin is passed over, and a married man taken. . . . Often it happens that married people, who form the larger portion of the people, in approving married candidates [for the priesthood], in effect approve themselves.

That is, the married majority regarded the connubial state as more suitable for a priest. That is precisely why Jerome wrote his tract: to induce them to abandon this view. His passionate remarks were directed against a learned opponent, who had, he bitterly complains, the support not only of "the commoner sort" but also of some of the most influential Christians in Rome.

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The superiority of virginity to marriage would not be declared dogma until the Council of Trent in the 16th century, after half a millennium of lobbying for it by celibate monastic communities, which controlled the media of Christian discourse from about 500 to about 1200. During this period, much of the opposition was expunged from the historical record; but enough survives to indicate the wide range of opinion on the subject in late antiquity—indeed, throughout Christian history.

Similarly, in the case of the Gnostics (about whom Pagels is a noted authority), she begins by warning her readers against mistaking them for a coherent movement, easily distinguishable from other Christians. Yet she herself relegates them to a separate chapter and struggles to present the apparently conflicting views of various Gnostic authorities as a homogeneous whole, as if it were not possible that they simply contradicted each other. She reinterprets the Gospel of Phillip as an overarching philosophy of Gnosticism by reading it as an equivocation on the subject of celibacy vs. marriage, rather than as support for one side of an “either or” debate. Yet the Gospel of Phillip is most likely just one among many Gnostic opinions, not the “key” to the Gnostic system of thought. There was no single system of thought.

PAGELS WARNS, appropriately, against the danger that personal belief in such subjective matters will contaminate the historian’s research and writing. But her blithe claims that Augustine utterly discounted free will, asserted the absolute depravity of human nature, and taught that humans could be moral only through the external intervention of grace or force are more appropriate as articles of faith than as inferences of history. Forests of trees have been felled to clarify Augustine’s views of nature (human and divine), grace, and free will—no wonder, since he changed his views over time, or vacillated, or both. Theologians, then and now, have disagreed vehemently about what he said, numerous councils have contradicted each other (and sometimes themselves) in interpreting his statements, and the Protestant Reformation was fueled in no small measure, theologically, by differing interpretations of these matters, specifically in relation to Augustine’s pronouncements.

It is conceivable that Pagels could cut through the tangled knots of these con-

troversies, even after 15 centuries of unresolved debate, and separate their strands in new and creative ways. But to present what amounts to an extreme Lutheran reading of Augustine as if it were a simple and self-evident deduction of history, without even acknowledging the degrees of uncertainty and personal judgment involved, is troubling in a work of non-sectarian scholarship. Pagels protects her argument against Augustine’s most detailed discussion of free will (in *De libero arbitrio*, which contradicts her thesis) by dismissing it as an “early work,” although Augustine himself, reconsidering it late in life in his *Retractions*, refined but explicitly did not repudiate its argument in favor of the independence of the will and individual moral responsibility.

PAGELS’S BOOK is said to shed new light on the origins of Western attitudes toward gender and sexuality. She does introduce a novel perspective, but the conclusions she draws from it are questionable. It is useful to remind the modern world that celibacy, although a deprivation, might also be a form of liberation. It freed Romans otherwise obligated to discharge civic duties through family responsibilities, and gave women an escape from life-threatening health risks as well as from subjection to men (a point already made by Peter Brown). But it is a long way from that notion to Pagels’s astounding claim that early Christian celibacy was “the source of the later Western idea of the absolute value of the individual—the value of every human being, including the destitute, the sick, and the newborn—quite apart from any contribution, real or potential, to the ‘common good.’” Surely rabbinic Judaism, other teachings of Christianity (“Whatsoever ye do to the least of my brethren . . .”), Attic and Roman philosophy, and the Enlightenment (to name but a few rather prominent currents of thought) played a greater role than the ideal of celibacy in the development of ideas about the worth of the individual.

I suspect this book was written, or at least completed, in haste. It includes a surprising number of careless mistakes and ill-considered statements. For example, the beginning sentences of the second and third paragraphs on page 89 appear to contradict each other directly, and the first sentences of the second and third paragraphs on 96 are either the same or very confusing, or both. This may also be part of the explanation

for the larger problems noted above. In fact, most histories of theology present monolithic systems where there were actually congeries of interactive opinions, and most neglect the crucial role of social context; they treat theological developments as if they alone constituted Christianity, and theology as if it were an empyrean shower falling on the masses rather than the distillate of mundane conflicts, bubbling up from the experiences and thoughts of living beings.

THE RELATIONSHIP between Christian thought and its social environment used to be conceived chiefly as the gradual imposition on the pagan masses of Christian ideals and theology. Pagels rightly directs us to think of a much more symbiotic interaction, but she does not go far enough. Gnostic views, for example, seem much less strange and particular when viewed against the backdrop of Hellenistic mythology—the belief system in which the vast majority of Christian converts (obviously including Gnostics) were reared. Many of their ostensibly bizarre interpretations of Judeo-Christian scriptures are amalgamations of Christian motifs with Hellenistic traditions about semi-divine beings and cosmological metamorphoses.

Until the very end of her book, Pagels makes no effort to infer the opinions of the masses. Such inferences are admittedly difficult, but difficulty is not a sufficient excuse for ignoring the major part of a movement, and some of her own evidence would in fact be well suited for this. Many aspects of the spiritual life and praxis of the Church, which are well known and readily accessible, offer alternative or additional explanations for the developments that Pagels traces. What seems to be a very gloomy and cynical view of human nature in Augustine’s *Confessions*, for example, may be related to liturgical practices of the fifth-century Church. It is shocking to modern sensibilities, accustomed to the idea of the innocent purity of infants and the worldly sinfulness of adults, to find that Augustine regards children as sinful from the day of their birth, reproaches himself harshly for the viciousness of what seem harmless teenage pranks, and juxtaposes these with the purity of his adult life after conversion.

But there is a profound disjunction in the experience of Christian life between Augustine’s age and ours. In his day, Christians were baptized and cleansed of sin as adults; and since no system of

penance was in widespread or regular use, sins after baptism had to be strenuously avoided. No doubt this fostered in the minds of Christians at the time an association of childhood with pagan immorality, and of adulthood, after baptism, with moral and godly behavior. Infant baptism became the rule within a century or two of Augustine, and Christians of later ages, cleansed of original sin at birth and then granted the opportunity of confession, entertained a more cheerful view not only of childhood, but of life in general. But these attitudes are owed not to a different understanding of the consequences of the Fall (which probably few Christians in any age could characterize with any degree of theological accuracy), but simply to a practical difference: the very same theology could give rise, depending on Church practices, to very different outlooks.

The view that human activities are ultimately motivated entirely by mundane needs and basic urges is not only cynical, it is wrong. As is frighteningly evident, large numbers of people will willingly die or kill others over the niceties of systems of undemonstrable faith. But it is equally misguided to imagine that the belief systems that so profoundly affect human history develop independently of the feelings, fears, and experiences of the ordinary individuals who espouse and then embody them. It is true that the abstractions of theology direct or influence the everyday lives of millions of people. But they are also inexorably influenced by, if not created out of, those same everyday lives.

JOHN BOSWELL

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CORRESPONDENCE, from page 6

on the economy, I cannot share his pessimistic view of *glasnost*. He argues that the Communist Party has concocted *glasnost* and *perestroika* to fool the long-suffering Soviet people into working harder in exchange for illusory gains in freedom and private enterprise. It is true that at the core of Gorbachev's reforms there is the recognition that the Soviet Union could not survive into the next

century as a military or economic power if it remained at an economic, political, and spiritual standstill. It is also true that *glasnost* has not quite reached the sacred icon of Lenin and *perestroika* has yet to progress beyond the rapid spread of home-brewed vodka and "cooperative" (read private) restaurants. But to reduce all that is happening to simply another, albeit devilishly clever, plot by the Bolsheviks to streamline the exploitation of its masses is to completely, almost deliberately, miss the point. Is not what Gorbachev is trying to do the best we could have expected? Is this not the peaceful evolution we always purported to encourage?

And can we really deny any idealism or liberalism in Gorbachev's motives? I find it difficult to dismiss his proposals at the Party conference to introduce secret ballots, multiple candidates, and an independent legislature as purely a tactic to shore up Communist rule. However qualified, what he has proposed is no less than the first glimmer of democracy in the Soviet Union's tortured history. He is a consummate politician, who has read Lenin not only for spiritual sustenance but as a handbook to political struggle. He obviously has also studied the fates of past would-be reformers—Khrushchev, Kosygin, Andropov—and has resolved to avoid their failures. Above all he has appeared aware of the danger of triggering the apparat's panic button, and usually he has camouflaged his more radical intentions behind soothing moderation. So it was when he issued his rather timid assessment of Stalin last November, prompting a howl of disappointed news stories. Within a few months, the campaign he triggered against Stalin had left virtually nothing of the old tyrant intact.

It takes only a few days in Moscow to sense the strength of the opposition. Yegor Ligachev may be no more than a provincial law-and-order hard-liner, but behind him is arrayed a grumbling majority of frightened apparatchiks and Party chieftains, disgruntled workers, KGB goons, and plain folk who simply cannot abide the sight of demonstrators on Red Square. But even if they triumph, there is much they can no longer turn back. *Glasnost* has unleashed a creativity that has pushed Soviet culture into new regions. Some icons are still sacred, but at the extraordinary rate at which taboos have been popping, there is no reason why Lenin won't get his own before long. Already the sedate *Novy Mir* has reported plans to publish

Solzhenitsyn, the most troublesome of the exiles. Experimental "studio" theaters have proliferated in basements and community halls in Moscow. Television shows rowdy live debates. Magazines compete for erstwhile outcasts.

So even if food is short and reforms are slow, Russia has come alive again and is searching, sometimes struggling, for its future. Nobody can predict where it will lead, but already far more has changed in two years than any of us foresaw. And even if democracy is still far off, a new generation is being weaned on a diet of debate and candor, potent antidotes to the fears, insecurity, and sense of inferiority that shaped its elders. As for us, it is too early to pass judgment on Gorbachev, and there is really not much we can do to help or hinder the process. But to dismiss what is happening as illusion or to debunk the process as sham is to deny deliberately the evidence and to miss the enormous import of the process.

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ATLANTA DIARIST

Dynasties, Old and New

LIKE A LOT of things about Michael Dukakis, his choice of Lloyd Bentsen appeals more to the head than to the heart. I understand the rationale. I've even become persuaded that it makes political sense. Bring back the Reagan strays, get Texas, motivate the quadrennially torpid conservative Democrats, reassure business, raise big money, display ruthless determination to win, scare the hell out of Bush—all very sensible. But don't ask me to like it. When I heard the news I could feel energy leach from every cell of my body. Bentsen's record is that of a big-business Tory Democrat, and within the Texas tradition he's more unguently reminiscent of John Connally than of Lyndon Johnson. Politicians like Bentsen always have made life miserable for Texas liberals, a brave and noble breed once epitomized by Ralph Yarborough, the incumbent Democratic senator whom Bentsen defeated for renomination in 1970 before disposing of Representative George Bush in the general election. Bentsen is more of a partisan Democrat than Sam Nunn, but he is fully as conservative. Of course, the fact that people like me can't stand the Bentsen choice but will still support the ticket in November is probably the clinching argument that the choice was a political masterstroke.

ONE NICE THING about the Bentsen nomination: assuming the ticket wins, he's almost guaranteed to be a one-term vice president. Once Bentsen has served his one-shot electoral purpose, Dukakis will have every incentive, four years hence, to give him a comfy ambassadorship somewhere and replace him with someone younger (Bentsen will be 71 in '92) and more compatible—someone Dukakis might actually want to succeed him. There will be plenty of possibilities: Bill Clinton, Bill Bradley, Bob Kerrey, Bill Gray, Al Gore. . . . Another consoling thought is Bentsen's elevation to the depths of the vice presidency would open up his Senate seat for Jim Hightower, the populist Texas agriculture commissioner whose little speech to the convention Tuesday night was a tiny taste of the punishment he would be capable of

dishing out to whatever hapless interim Republican would get appointed pending a special election.

THIS CONVENTION, by the way, is absurd. It is an allegedly deliberative body whose success is measured precisely by the degree to which it does no deliberating, since any sign of dissent or controversy is seen as *lèse-majesté*. The delegates wear funnier hats than they do in the Supreme Soviet, but their scope for discretionary decision-making is more limited. The nominating role of conventions having been displaced by the primary system, their only remaining function is to be the pretext for a gigantic press Woodstock. The most impressive sight here is not the convention hall itself—which is too small to hold all the delegates, let alone the armies of VIPs, contributors, and hangers-on—but the enormous indoor press encampment across the street, where hundreds of news organizations have divided a room as big as a half-dozen airplane hangars into an endless Casbah of work spaces marked off by blue curtains. To walk through this impromptu mediapolis is to be overwhelmed by the elephantine extravagance and pointlessness of it all. The work spaces are full of tables piled high with expensive computers, fax machines, laser photo developers, television sets, and of course free food. Ten thousand journalists stand around telling each other how much better off they'd have been if they'd stayed home and watched the whole thing on C-Span.

THE SAME MIGHT be said of the delegates, many of whom, come to think of it, actually are watching the whole thing on C-Span, in a spillover auditorium set aside for the purpose. But the delegates don't even have the minimal dignity of being able to busy themselves telling people about what they are passively observing. "Everybody is a spectator here," Bruce Babbitt told me, "and the spectators with status are the reporters." Babbitt was sporting press credentials himself, as a representative of two newspapers and four television stations. "You know, it's ab-

surd," Babbitt added. "They spent a year and a half panning me for my television technique, and now they're paying me for it."

TUESDAY NIGHT was set aside for the party's premier orators, Ted Kennedy and Jesse Jackson. They did fine, especially Jackson, whose closing litany of solidarity with the poor and discouraged, with its tender refrain of "I understand," left many black and white faces wet with tears. But the unexpected star speakers were the ones who immediately preceded the two veteran spellbinders. Introducing his uncle from the podium, John F. Kennedy Jr. was poised, calm, and so handsome that Walter Isaacson of *Time*, who was standing next to me, remarked that the roof almost buckled from the sudden drop in air pressure caused by the simultaneous sharp intake of so many thousands of breaths. John Kennedy has none of the slightly edgy boisterousness of his cousin Joe, who backslapped and kissed his way across the convention floor on opening night. John's charm is simpler, quieter, and more modest than his congressman cousin's. But I would guess that his political career, should he choose to pursue one (he is a law student), will ultimately take him further. The other young star was Jesse Jackson Jr. All five of the Jackson children spoke briefly in introducing their father, but Jesse Jr., who spoke last, gave a mini-speech that was well above the convention average in the forcefulness and clarity of its delivery. He said that just as the Kennedy children are proud to be Kennedys, he and his brothers and sisters are proud to be Jacksons. Young Jesse, 23 years old and a graduate of both Washington's snooty St. Alban's prep school and his father's alma mater, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, is said to be interested in running for office. The Adamses, the Harrisons, the Roosevelts, the Tafts, the Stevensons, the Kennedys, and now the Jacksons: we may have been witness to the debut of America's first black political dynasty.

HENDRIK HERTZBERG



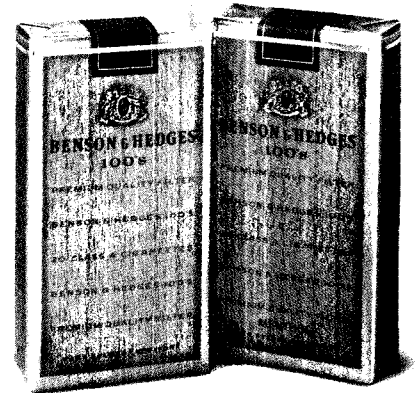
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